The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

OUR MAN IN PANAMA

The Administration's campaign to bring down Gen. Manuel Noriega has a built-in boomerang: José Blandón, the former adviser to the Panamanian strongman, who is now a central witness for the Feds in their narcotics case against Noriega.

Blandón, who testified on Capitol Hill last week, has credibly maintained that Noriega has overseen an empire of drug trafficking, weapons dealing, money laundering and corruption that would put Ferdinand Marcos to shame. But Blandón also has illuminated the—take your pick—complicity, incompetence or overwhelming hypocrisy of the Reagan Administration.

While Noriega himself allegedly cleaned up as a drug kingpin, the Drug Enforcement Agency and Attorney General Edwin Meese 3d commended him for fighting the war on drugs. At the same time, Noriega was meeting with C.I.A. chief William Casey and was on the payroll of the agency, which must have known of his wide-ranging extracurricular activities.

In Noriega the C.I.A. had a partner in its war against Nicaragua. Blandón was there when Lieut. Col. Oliver North cut a deal with Noriega to help the *contras*. Blandón also disclosed that the C.I.A. sent to Noriega intelligence reports on U.S. senators and their staffs who were traveling to Panama. Blandón said other "Central American leaders involved with intelligence agencies" told him they received similar information, raising the specter of C.I.A. spying on Congress.

For years Noriega has been a thug; but he was our thug. The Administration, obviously figuring his usefulness is spent, has squared off against him. The portrait now being drawn of Noriega, however ugly, is a mirror image. No matter how hard it tries, the Administration cannot escape the reflection. As Senator John Kerry said, "We are our own worst enemy."

IOWA
Andrew Kopkind

GEPHARDT'S 'POPULISM'
Thomas Ferguson

DEATH SQUAD TRIAL IN HONDURAS
Anne Manuel

AFGHAN PEACE FLURRIES
Ahmed Rashid
Jefferson Morley

HOBSBAWM AND THE AGE OF EMPIRE
Geoffrey Field

THE PHANTOM OF KANSAS

UNMASKING THE OTHER BOB DOLE

DAVID CORN

In a political season marked by character issues, what do you make of a presidential candidate who once secretly accepted funds from a White House slush fund, has misrepresented his role in key historical episodes and has dished out favors to various special interests?

Meet Bob Dole.

Now, after seven years of greed-is-good government, how about a candidate who has fought for low-income food programs, civil rights, closing tax loopholes and aid for the physically disabled?

Again, meet Bob Dole.

By and large, it's the second Bob Dole who is displayed on the campaign trail and in the new dual autobiography, *The Doles: Unlimited Partners*, that he wrote with his wife, Elizabeth Hanford Dole. "My record is there. You can study it," Senator Bob Dole likes to say in his speeches. "I voted [in Congress] fifteen or twenty thousand times in twenty-seven years." Yet Dole, the Kansas Republican, is making highly selective use of that record. In fact, Dole, candidate and author, has engaged in some blatant distortions of history.

A review of Dole's years in Congress (he was elected to the House in 1960 and to the Senate in 1968) yields a composite portrait of a hardball conservative with a liberal change-up. His position on issues in the conservative pantheon is nearly perfect: He supports school prayer, a ban on abortion, tuition tax credits, weakening gun control, the *contras*, Jonas Savimbi's Unita and Star Wars. But then there's his championing of food stamps and other measures usually thought of as

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LETTERS.

LAST THOUGHTS

New York City

For the record, when *The Nation* called [see "Beat the Devil," Oct. 31, 1987], this is what I said: "Alexander Cockburn is a pathological liar and America hater; he is not a journalist but a character assassin and anybody who cooperates with him is either a masochist or an idiot, and I am neither." Having read his column I can add that he is also a plagiarist, having lifted the entire fable of our Managua trip without attribution from the benighted pages of the *People's World*. This confirms what we always knew, that Alex is a Communist front.

David Horowitz

COLLIER'S TWO CENTS

New York City

P.S. I told somebody that Alex was the Charles Manson of the left press except that he has tattooed a hammer and sickle on his forehead instead of a swastika. He is a smear waiting to happen and makes obvious that your alleged sensitivity to McCarthyism is a sham.

Peter Collier

COCKBURN REPLIES

Los Angeles

I hope David brings a more reliable memory to his biographical work. My description of his response to factual inquiry as "incoherent abuse" was based on a memorandum of record written for me by my colleague Leon Lazaroff, the relevant parts of which I now quote:

> Approximately five minutes after I had hung up with Mr. James Denton, I received the call from David Horowitz. Denton had given me Horowitz's number as a means to fact check points of your article which mention him and quote him. Instead of the usual procedure of discussing and checking each individual point successively, Horowitz had me list each of the facts in the column to be checked. Once I was finished, he said:
>
> "Alexander Cockburn is such a pathological liar and America hater, a hater of America, that only a masochist or an idiot would cooperate with him in anything he does." "Nothing that he says is true, he is a pathological liar." "He is not a journalist, he is the most unscrupulous person there is." Then he made a comment about Victor [Navasky] which I didn't catch and then he said, "All they want to do is destroy me. They've destroyed others and now they're going after me. It's fine with me if they want to."
>
> Obviously it was clear I wasn't going to get any confirmations or respectable challenges to that which I had listed, but I tried to ask him something specific nonetheless. His response was:
>
> "You are asking me for facts, but with Cockburn it won't matter. He does not know how to tell the truth. Any detail I could tell you would be used to assassinate me."
>
> Then there was a pause in the conversation, and suddenly he launched into about three sentences at once, sounding very disjointed and harried. (Throughout the conversation, I might add, he sounded as if he was chewing on a raw carrot and wheezing during pauses of speech.) Then he began to talk about Valladares, "This guy was in jail for twenty-two years and . . . ." "Alex's father was a stringer for Pravda and *Time* at the same time during the height of Stalin's killing, and he still thinks everything he did was great. . . . And his father worked for the Spanish Communist Party when they were killing hundreds. Alex Cockburn hates America, he would like nothing more than to see the K.G.B. triumph over America."
>
> Then things got a little seedier. "Alex Cockburn is a fuck-paw. He is the sleaziest person on the left I know. Nothing he writes is the truth." Then he repeated Mary McCarthy's line about Lillian Hellman, saying, "Everything Alexander Cockburn writes down to the *and*'s and the *the*'s is a lie." "Even though he spells my name right it's a lie."
>
> After this I asked him a few things about his recent trip to Managua: "Who did you speak to when you were there? Who paid for your trip to Managua? Did you speak to members of a delegation from Berkeley, California?"
>
> I, of course, received no response except more of the above, it having already been established that I was either a masochist or an idiot to be working with you. All in a day's work.

Perhaps I should have said "semi-coherent" abuse. I'm willing to have the record corrected if it helps make David feel better about life. I know his thesis that I'm a serf of Moscow requires that my news come from the *People's World*, but *The Nation* had already published my account of his escapades in Managua by the time I read the excellent report in the *People's World*. David should know that he is not well loved in the Bay Area. Hardly had he stepped off the plane from his U.S.I.A.-funded jaunt before several members of the Berkeley delegation who had witnessed his hotel tab being picked up by a man from the U.S. Embassy made haste to call *The Nation*. David and his partner should figure out which one of them wants copyright on the bit about Charles Manson and the hammer and sickle. Here it's attributed to Collier, but in a "Page Six" item in the *New York Post* it comes out of David's mouth. Not many people may have seen the latter item, since the *Post* saw fit to run it on the worst circulation day of the entire year—the Saturday of the New Year holiday, an index of the low news value attached to these Renegades for Reagan. But then timing has always been a problem for David, most sadly expressed in his seconding of a *Ramparts* bookkeeper, Betty Van Patter, to a project in which he and some Black Panthers were involved, for which decision she paid with her life. He jumped on the Reagan ship just as it sank beneath the waves and is no doubt now wondering whether to offer his services to Pierre du Pont before joining Ronald Radosh in Social Democrats U.S.A. As I remarked before, I think his problems stem from an insufficiency of Doris Day/Rock Hudson movies in his early teens, a disaster he attributes to Moscow along with anything else that vexes his comfortable existence.

Alexander Cockburn

PRESTO!

Northridge, Calif.

The January 16 *Nation* touches on two of my major concerns, S.D.I./Star Wars and Social Security [see Rosy Nimroody, "The S.D.I. Drain," and John L. Hess, "Social Security Is for Everybody"]. May I offer the following simple solutions to problems posed by these programs?

Regarding S.D.I./Star Wars, I suggest the following scenario:

1. The United States simply announces that it has a strategic defense system that works perfectly.

2. With a little covert prompting and encouragement, the Soviet Union issues a similar announcement.

3. Then, since both sides have impregnable defenses and their missiles are useless, both sides scrap their strategic missile systems.

When these three steps are complete, both sides will have arrived at exactly the same position they would achieve by developing and deploying S.D.I./Star Wars systems, without incurring the immense costs. The simplicity and potential benefits of this proposal are staggering.

Regarding Social Security, I propose treating benefits as ordinary income and raising personal income-tax exemptions for couples 65 and older to, say, $15,000 (approximating the maximum annual benefit level, with corresponding exemptions for individuals and retirees between 62 and 65). In this way, if Social Security benefits are their sole source of income, they will not be taxed. If couples or individuals have other income sources, the added income will be taxed in the usual way. What could be more simple or fair?

Thomas M. Stout

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EDITORIALS.

Straws From Iowa

The absurdly long and obscenely expensive Iowa caucuses campaigns produced a small tempest in a teapot whose leaves cannot be clearly read. Still, some patterns are beginning to emerge. Pat Robertson's second-place finish is an upset victory for the most hateful elements in the nation today, but at the same time it expresses the widespread popular contempt for a repressive and exclusive political establishment that wallows in sleaze, greed and mediocrity. Both Robertson and Jack Kemp, who is propelled by that same sensibility, have been scoring points with their attacks on Republican elitism in financial as well as social affairs, from the "rich men's club" that runs the economy to the "white men's club" that determines party membership. Right-wing populism is a recurrent historical nightmare, but it occurs when other dreams are dashed and the old and contradicted consciousness cannot support a sagging system.

The Democrats are struggling to design a new political paradigm, but their work is at something of an impasse. Jesse Jackson, who was often described on caucus night as "the soul and conscience" of the party, has given progressive populism a big name and a good press again, as witness the mad dash of candidates to the most liberal positions that

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the Democrats, more or less as a body, have espoused since the end of World War II. So little difference separates them, in fact, that voters are forced to choose on the most ephemeral of issues, like the color of a candidate's eyebrows—or the color of his skin.

Gephardt's judicious use of an eyebrow pencil before his TV appearances apparently did the trick for him in Iowa, but he will need all the mascara he can muster to camouflage the glaring inconsistencies—and un-Democratic activities—in his record. [For more on his trade policies, see Thomas Ferguson, page 221]. Fortunately, makeup is of no use to Jackson. His creditable double-digit showing in Iowa offers evidence against the party elders' case that whites will never vote for a black man for President. If you plot a candidate's total votes in Iowa against the size of his staff, the dollars spent, the media time bought and the number of days he campaigned in the state, Jackson was the most effective. But he cannot easily come up with money and create an organization of the scale needed to repeat the success he's had with targeted areas and constituencies in the electorate as a whole. Only a huge social movement, such as does not now exist, can generate such resources.

The three Democratic front-runners in Iowa badly need a strategy: not to distinguish themselves on the issues but to convey their individual concepts of the meaning of this election for America. This is not any old quadrennium. There is a new wind in this season of transition, and those caucus results the other night are merely the first straws blown by it.

Gimme Some Spin

Churdan, Iowa

At midnight on the eve of the Iowa caucuses, the bar at the Savery Hotel in downtown Des Moines served its last legal drinks, put the lights up to a garish glare and sent a phalanx of pundits, politicians and media groupies into the adjoining lobby, like singles left in a lounge at the end of an unconsummated night. These patrons, of course, were not specifically looking for a good time, at least not in the Dionysian sense. They were, however, desperately seeking "spin," a way to make sense of the frenzied, confusing and often contradictory campaigns that culminated the next day in a kind of Democratic deadlock and a startling Republican upset. From the looks of it, few marriages were made that night, and the crowd had nought but conventional wisdom, cynical impressions and blatant lies to communicate to a waiting world.

Good spin, like good sex, is hard to come by these days, even in Iowa, where each campaign has its designated "spin doctors" whose duty it is to mingle with the media and put the best possible face on the disastrous events that befall their candidates. It is reliably rumored that the Dukakis office paid an enviable salary to a California woman just to sit, swizzle and spin in the Savery bar from sunset to closing time. Reporters and "consultants"—a highly adaptive subspecies of parasite that has successfully starved politics of informed analysis and interesting ideas—gather to be spun and then to spin one another, in a version of *La Ronde* conducted with gossip instead of spirochetes. One reporter for a national newspaper came up with the line that Dick Gephardt would win precisely because "he's a pure phony." In a trice, the room was infected with his insight. All of a sudden, Al Franken, the writer/comedian from *Saturday Night Live*, appeared in a knot of lobby lizards around William Schneider, of the American Enterprise Institute, this year's sultan of spin. Franken was induced to perform his imitation of Paul Simon, which he did to hilarious effect, even without fake ears. I may be reading too much into that scene, but it seemed that Simon's second-place slump on caucus day could be distantly related to the ridicule he suffered in the Savery Hotel the night before. You cannot surely count the wages of spin.

There was no media blitz in the Community Room behind the firehouse here in Churdan, a tiny town about two hours' drive, through desolate winter farms, from Des Moines, but the consequences of the long campaign were concentrated in the Democratic caucus that met here on the dot of 7 o'clock. About seventy "attenders"—a record number—filled all the folding chairs and waited patiently while the co-chairs went down the agenda of procedural formalities and local issues to be resolved. The caucus unanimously went on record against prison expansion, for progressive farm legislation and against construction of a dam that would destroy the pristine nature of the nearby Brushy Creek valley.

"Now it's time to choose the next President of the United States," the moderator announced, and everyone jumped from their seats, as best they could (the median age appeared to be about 55), like kindergarteners playing musical chairs. The object was to gather a "viable" caucus—15 percent of those attending—under a candidate's sign, designated by the first two letters of his last name. GE had the most. JA was second. None of the others had the magic viable number of eleven, but the single BA supporter was up for grabs. "Come on over, Margaret," a DU person cajoled. Margaret's defection, along with a few who were UN (uncommitted), made DU viable too. SI didn't make it; his people went to JA and DU. HA and GO got none.

Gephardt had saturation TV ads and good organization in this area, and it was clear that both the media and the messengers got the word out that he was good on the farm issues that most affect the community's life. He was also culturally comfortable and politically safe; he talks populist but he signifies conservative. "Dukakis is a bit too 'back East' for us out here," one attender told me. Jackson is anything but safe, he had little paid media and he never made it to Greene County. But he was right on all the issues (indeed, Gephardt took most of his from Jackson), and he had a solid, low-key organizer who farms locally. As much as media make a difference in the early months of these campaigns, organization tells in the last few days.

Pat Robertson's romp in the Greene County Republican caucus was driven by dedicated organizers from fundamen-

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talist churches. Jesse Jackson had even greater success in Adair County and its seat of Greenfield, where he made his state headquarters. "We had the kind of organization in this county that Dukakis had all over the state," a Jackson volunteer said. "If we had his money we could have won it all." But then, if Dukakis had a movement, *he* might have won it all.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Dick and Trade

The debate thus far about Representative Richard Gephardt in the national media has focused almost entirely on one issue: trade, or more specifically, the famous "Gephardt amendment" added to the trade bill last year by the House of Representatives and currently under consideration by a joint conference committee of the House and Senate. The amendment requires countries such as Japan and South Korea, which consistently export more goods to the United States than they buy from this country, to reduce those trade surpluses by 10 percent a year. If they failed to do so their goods would be hit with a series of new penalty duties designed to force them to balance the accounts.

To most of its opponents, the fight over the Gephardt amendment is less a political struggle than a holy crusade. Labeling the amendment arrant protectionism, the measure's critics—who include most major multinational financiers and business executives, many economists and virtually all the press—compare it to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, which they claim triggered the Great Depression. They argue that its passage would be disastrous for American exports and the world economy.

From this standpoint, Gephardt's triumph in Iowa resembles an economic equivalent of Pat Robertson's meteoric rise within the Republican Party—the result of a calculated and cynical attempt by "special interests" (in this case, primarily the A.F.L.-C.I.O., allied with perhaps a handful of unrepresentative industrialists) to exploit for political purposes a gushing current of popular rage and distress.

As a piece of political propaganda, this critique of the Gephardt phenomenon is a masterpiece. Merely by being stated, it virtually compels assent. But as a balanced assessment of the political forces at work in Gephardt's campaign and, more important, as a guide for forecasting the future, it is hopelessly inaccurate.

For all the talk about the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s support of the Gephardt amendment (and the aid extended Gephardt's campaign in Iowa by the United Automobile Workers), it is simply not true that Gephardt's controversial trade program is protectionist or that it is primarily inspired by the labor unions.

Consider, for example, the geographic pattern of the House vote on the Gephardt amendment. Two points are immediately apparent. First, although Democratic Congressional delegations from heavily unionized states such as Pennsylvania and Michigan assuredly supported the bill, Representatives from many other states where organized labor remains strong—such as New York, California and Illinois—voted in substantial numbers against it. Second, many Democrats from the South and West, where unions can almost qualify for official certification as endangered species, also supported Gephardt's proviso.

But if it is not plausible to identify labor as the inspiration for the amendment, the real source is not difficult to discover: the changing American business community. Now "free traders" and "protectionists" in the simple senses really do exist, and have weighed in during the recent House debates. For analyzing business support for the Gephardt amendment, however, the traditional model is inadequate. It fails to distinguish two sorts of firms that now exercise a major influence on the debate over trade.

The first of these consists of multinationals and exporters in sectors such as electronics, aerospace, autos, construction and telecommunications. They have a history of successful operations abroad and are eager to maintain their position. Their businesses, however, happen to be in product lines that the Japanese, the South Koreans, the Taiwanese or indeed many European countries strive to control. The second comprises firms (almost always capital-intensive enterprises, since persisting partisan differences in regard to labor policy put most labor-intensive firms solidly in the G.O.P.) that are increasingly fearful they may not make it in the world economy of the 1990s without a more active national "industrial policy." Both of these kinds of businesses are threatened by the current Reagan trade policy, and both were conspicuously in evidence during the lobbying last spring for the Gephardt amendment.

Formally committed to protection for textiles, steel and probably some other sectors at the time he took office, President Reagan has pursued a fairly complex strategy in regard to international trade. Powerful sectors hurt by foreign competition, such as steel and autos, have been awarded substantial protective barriers of various sorts. But while appeasing these sectors, the Administration has sought to hold the line elsewhere. It has exalted free trade as a principle and, cheered on by the financial community and many successful multinationals, has fiercely resisted pressure to curb trade with Japan and other Pacific-rim countries that export massively into the American home market.

For American multinationals and exporters that want to crack the Japanese market, however, the Administration's policy toward the Japanese is a problem. To these firms the Japanese reluctance to do business looks more and more like a carefully calculated strategy to weaken them and elevate the position of Japan Incorporated.

After, in some cases, years of negotiating with meager results, many of these companies have become increasingly convinced that the United States must radically change course. They suggest that it is time to try something dramatic—perhaps a diplomatic equivalent of Matthew Perry's famous expedition to Japan, which opened that country to the West under threat of naval bombardment. To this sort of business concern, the Reagan Administration's comparatively amiable policy toward the Japanese appears increasingly irrational and dangerous.

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Similarly, U.S. firms that fear they cannot survive without a more vigorous industrial policy than the Reagan-Bush Administration's cannot sit still either. For firms of this latter sort, such as Chrysler, which supported Gephardt's effort to pass his amendment, the trade bill is perhaps chiefly interesting as a way to help protect the U.S. home market and as a bridge to a more activist economic policy.

The big winners under the Gephardt amendment, however, are likely to be enterprises of the first type, those seeking to open foreign markets, particularly in Japan. A prime example is Monsanto, headquartered in St. Louis (a city Gephardt's Congressional district overlaps), which donated a set of silicon wafers for him to distribute as an attention-getting device in the final days before the House vote last spring and whose political action committee has also contributed to his presidential campaign.

If years of studying American business and legislation have taught me anything, it is that one can always tell the lions by their "clause." And make no mistake about it: It is this pride of lions whose claws are everywhere in evidence on the Gephardt amendment, not the rather more delicate paw prints of organized labor.

Three particular features of the Gephardt amendment stand out in this regard. First, the bill's sponsors are telling the truth when they protest that they are aiming to promote more trade, not wreck the world trading system. The 10 percent penalty they propose on countries that run illegal export surpluses is paltry—currency swings alone would probably cause a bigger shift in values every year.

Second, the amendment does not guarantee any particular industry tariff relief; which products are hit with extra duties depends on what the offending country exports. To be sure, a firm the size of Chrysler can be confident that its sector would benefit from any duties slapped on the Japanese. Industries and unions that seek to guarantee themselves protection, however, typically want a definite duty on the goods that they produce—undoubtedly the reason so many of the true protectionists in the business community held back from supporting the amendment.

Finally and most tellingly, the Gephardt amendment is written carefully, to require trade between the United States and its partners to balance, not necessarily diminish. What the bill requires is a reduction in the other countries' trade balance with the United States. There are two ways this can be done: either by decreasing those nations' exports to the United States (which, along with the damage this principle does to the idea of a multilateral trading system, is what the bill's opponents chiefly fear) or by increasing their imports from the United States. It is the latter that the amendment's sponsors are counting on and is precisely the type of action the U.S. firms that believe themselves the victims of Japanese discrimination have been demanding (note that this feature of the bill would permit imports to rise, if exports did, something protectionists in declining industries would hardly favor).

Viewed in this light, Gephardt's famous amendment scarcely constitutes evidence of a new turn to protectionism by the Democrats. But recognizing this fact must raise further questions about the new "populist" Gephardt and the whole program—including oil tariffs and farm cartelization—that he is running on. These are important issues requiring urgent consideration. THOMAS FERGUSON

Thomas Ferguson is visiting professor of political science and a senior associate of the McCormack Institute for Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. He is the co-author of Right Turn: The Decline of the Democrats and the Future of American Politics *(Hill & Wang).*

BUKHARIN REDUX

The formal exoneration of Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin by the Soviet Supreme Court on February 4, fifty years after his execution as an "enemy of the people," is dramatic reaffirmation of the radical anti-Stalinist nature of Mikhail Gorbachev's proposed reforms, or *perestroika.* Many Western commentators, having misinterpreted the Soviet leader's speech on history, delivered on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Revolution, and the removal of Boris Yeltsin as Moscow party secretary, both last November, concluded that Gorbachev had adopted a "centrist" position in the broadening struggle over reform. They were wrong.

After Lenin's death, in 1924, Bukharin was the chief Politburo defender of the New Economic Policy and leader of the party group that opposed Stalin's abolition of those conciliatory, market-oriented measures in 1928-29. By repudiating the fraudulent charges on which Bukharin was tried and condemned to death by Stalin at the 1938 Moscow trial, Gorbachev has linked his campaign to de-Stalinize the Soviet system to an alternative historical model of socialism initiated by Lenin and elaborated by Bukharin. Rehabilitated as a founding father, Bukharin can now be enlisted as Lenin's real programmatic heir and a forerunner of *perestroika* as anti-Stalinism. Indeed, *Kommunist*, the official journal of the Central Committee, has just reprinted Bukharin's last great protest against Stalin's policies of imposed collectivization and draconian industrialization. Originally published in January 1929, it is titled "Lenin's Political Testament."

But the battle to extricate the Soviet Union from Stalin's legacy is far from over. As Gorbachev's reforms become more far-reaching, political opposition, much of it neo-Stalinist, continues to grow. And just as Gorbachev's supporters reach back for Bukharin's ideas, his opponents insist that Stalin's "whip" is the only solution to the Soviet Union's problems, as it was sixty years ago. In this bitter and fateful struggle over the Soviet past, we see the nation's present alternatives as well. STEPHEN F. COHEN

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

In England prisoners are detained "at Her Majesty's pleasure" and are therefore often ironically termed "guests of Her Majesty." After his years in Reading Gaol, during which he was witness to the flogging of a mentally deficient inmate and the dismissal of a warder who showed kindness to a child locked up for poaching rabbits, Oscar Wilde observed, "If this is how Her Majesty treats them, then she doesn't deserve to *have* any prisoners." I could not find this biting comment in Richard Ellmann's voluminous new biography of Wilde, nor could I detect this aspect of Wilde from any of the book's flattering reviews, most of which have represented him as a sort of sumptuous fop, possessed of a dangerous vanity, whose tale may be told as an example of hubris.

Yet the salient point about Wilde was the economy and address of his wit. He did not froth with bons mots like some second-rate charmer. He was a tough and determined Irishman who more than once flattened bullies with his fist, and most of the time—if we exempt pardonable and tempting sallies about blue china and decorative screens—his drawling remarks were not snobbish or mannered. I suppose that people need to see him as a species of languid dandy, which is why *The Soul of Man Under Socialism* is almost never discussed when dear Oscar's name comes up.

Try to find that essay in any of the current anthologies of Wilde. First published in 1891, it was geldingly retitled *The Soul of Man* while Wilde was in prison. It expressed the sensibility that had impelled him to take the side of the Irish rebels and, in particular, to oppose the British government's attempted frame-up of Charles Stewart Parnell, who, like Wilde, was destroyed on a charge of immorality when all else had failed. It gave Wilde the same distinction as that which he acquired by being the only writer in London to sign George Bernard Shaw's petition for the Haymarket martyrs. And it contains the following imperishable sentence:

> The chief advantage that would result from the establishment of Socialism is, undoubtedly, the fact that Socialism would relieve us from that sordid necessity of living for others which, in the present condition of things, presses so hardly upon almost everybody.

This is not the flippant remark that philistines might take it to be. It is in fact what is truly meant by "compassion," a word now made to sound sickening in the mouths of Democratic hypocrites.

What those hypocrites mean when they intone the hack word "compassion" is that we should not forget the needy and the desperate as we pursue our glorious path of self-advancement. This is the rough equivalent of the older injunction that we should remember the wretched in our prayers. Wilde was proposing something infinitely more daring and intelligent—that we regard poverty, ugliness and the exploitation of others as something repulsive to ourselves. If we see a slum, a ghetto, a beggar, or an old person eating pet food, we should not waste pity on the victim. We should want the abolition of such conditions for our own sakes. The burden of enduring them is too much.

This is why early socialists were quite proud to be accused of spitting in the face of charity. The principle that an injury to one is an injury to all is not just talk; it is the expression of a solidarity that recognizes mutual interest. As Wilde also wrote, in his review of Edward Carpenter's *Chants of Labour*, "For to make men Socialists is nothing, but to make Socialism human is a great thing." His appreciation of paradox here makes an excellent match with his rejection of sentimentality.

There is another sense in which it would be nice to think that Wilde intended his insight about "living for others." In the great working-class novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* the laborer Robert Tressell describes the feelings of charity and gratitude that overwhelm the credulous, patriotic men who worked alongside him. They were content to spend their entire lives living for others—their betters—each of them confident of his own sturdy independence. This type did not disappear with the waning of the Industrial Revolution. You can meet him today, the despair of "progressive" intellectuals, as he bellies up to the bar with his "can't fool me" talk and proceeds to speak, sometimes using the very same phrases, in the tones of the President's last lying paean to native virtues. Praise for these philanthropists, especially at times when they are needed to be expended in war, is the only official rhetoric you hear that mentions the word "class." Almost the only place that class distinctions are stressed these days is at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

They deserve to be stressed more often. Society labors on, supporting both an enormously wealthy upper class, whose corporate holdings are frequently tax free or even tax subsidized, and a growing underclass, which is sporadically and pathetically cited as a spur to conscience. Never is it asked, What are these classes *for*?

A sort of moral blackmail is exerted from both poles. The underclass, one gathers, should be dulled with charity and welfare provision lest it turn nasty. The upper class must likewise be conciliated by vast handouts, lest it lose the "incentive" to go on generating wealth. A rising tide, as we have recently learned, does not lift all boats, nor does a falling tide sink them all. If people were to recognize that they are all in the same boat, they would take better care of its furnishings, its comfort and its general décor. This is what Wilde meant by the importance of the aesthetic.

Radicals have been taught to distrust any too-great display of individualism, and where they forget this lesson there are always conservatives to remind them (a madly sweet but slightly lugubrious example of this style appears in the current *New Criterion*, reprobating my good self). Wilde himself was haunted by a Podhoretz-like chaplain in prison, who reported that the cell reeked of semen. (How could he tell?) We are in the debt of the brave man who taught us to ask, of their majesties, whether they deserve us, or our continued amiable subservience.

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ARTICLES.

HONDURAN HUMAN RIGHTS CASE

Death Squads Go on Trial

ANNE MANUEL

One day in late July 1982, in the Honduran town of Choluteca, Elsa Escoto overheard a man at the hospital where she worked discuss a strange incident he had witnessed. When she questioned him closely, he said he had seen a group of armed men, some of them in uniform, seize a civilian on a motorcycle. They had forced him into the cab of a pickup truck and heaved his motorcycle into the rear. The description of the victim and the time of the incident suggest it was indeed the capture, by a Honduran death squad, of Escoto's brother-in-law, Saúl Godínez Cruz, a 32-year-old schoolteacher who disappeared that July 22.

Testifying last month at an unprecedented trial before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, a judicial arm of the Organization of American States, Escoto told of threats against her brother-in-law written in her notebook during breaks between classes at the night school where Godínez was a teacher and she a pupil. One of three military agents who attended classes but never seemed to do any work, Lieut. Segundo Flores Murillo, has since been identified by a witness as a death squad leader.

The trial of the government of Honduras for the disappearance of Godínez and three other individuals may be one of the most significant human rights events of the decade. The high stakes in this case are evident in the turmoil that surrounds it. Since hearings opened last year, two witnesses have been murdered and two others have been threatened with death.

Americans have come to expect little from the O.A.S., which, Lyndon Johnson once remarked, "couldn't pour piss out of a boot if the instructions were written on the heel." The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has never before placed a government on trial, having in the past only been asked to issue advisory opinions.

But in April 1986 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights asked the court to hear the cases of Honduran citizens Godínez and Angel Manfredo Velásquez Rodríguez, and Costa Ricans Francisco Fairén Garbi and Yolanda Solís Corrales. All of them were believed to have been "disappeared," tortured and murdered by clandestine death squads run by the Honduran armed forces. The Reagan Administration is closely identified with the death squads, having provided funds and training for their members in both the United States and Honduras.

Anne Manuel is reports editor of Americas Watch, a human rights organization.

Not only is this the first trial of a government in the inter-American system, it is, significantly, the first time a government has been tried for the crime of disappearance, a terror technique employed by the Nazis and subsequently perfected by Latin American regimes. According to Amnesty International, a disappearance is a case in which someone is believed to have been detained by authorities who deny any knowledge of the victim's whereabouts. In the past two decades, thousands have been disappeared by government forces in Argentina, Guatemala, Chile and El Salvador, to mention only the worst offenders. In most of these cases, disappearance is synonymous with death, the only difference being that the victim's family and friends are tormented by uncertainty and the improbable hope that their loved one could someday reappear. Testifying before the court about his son's disappearance, Francisco Fairén Almengor remarked that the "emptiness" he feels, lacking even his son's corpse, "is the worst crime they have committed against us."

Those trying the case have their own experience of oppression. Thomas Buergenthal, the U.S. judge named by Costa Rica, was the youngest survivor of Auschwitz. Among the attorneys assisting the prosecution, Juan Méndez was jailed and tortured in Argentina; Claudio Grossman was exiled from Chile.

Honduran officials have characterized the disappearances as part of a sinister leftist plot to destroy Honduran democracy. Attorney General Rubén Darío Zepeda outlined this theory to a reporter for a Honduran newspaper: "Let's assume a person disappears, he left with a false passport via Mexico. From there he traveled to Czechoslovakia, Cuba and Russia. There preparations are made for him to return and assault the democratic system, where the basic individual liberties, freedom of religion, of thought and of movement are guaranteed."

In court, the defense has argued that the judges should dismiss the case because there are no bodies to prove that any crime took place. But despite the absence of concrete evidence in the case of the four victims, the seven judges (among them Buergenthal and a Honduran citizen) have examined the entire policy of disappearing suspected subversives. According to testimony to the court from a Honduran Army defector, from victims of disappearances who survived and from human rights activists, the Honduran government set up a secret unit that seized, interrogated, tortured and murdered more than 130 people between 1981 and 1984. Although it has operated under several names, the unit has come to be known as Battalion 316.

Founded by Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martínez, police director and later armed forces chief during those years, the unit operated with close Central Intelligence Agency supervision and training. Key members of the unit received U.S. instruction in interrogation, surveillance and hostage rescue. The operational commander of the battalion in its first years was a police captain named Alexander Hernández, a graduate of the International Police Academy established by the Ken-

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nedy Administration under the defunct Office of Public Safety and now director of the Honduran police officer training school. U.S. officials have told *New York Times* reporter James LeMoyne that the Reagan Administration was well aware of the murders carried out by the C.I.A.-trained unit.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights may demand that the Honduran government pay damages to the families of the victims; but more important, it may order the government to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the disappearances, something Honduran civilian rulers, like their counterparts in Guatemala and El Salvador, have steadfastly refused to do. The unwillingness to prosecute human rights offenders among the military and security forces is perhaps the fundamental problem with the Central American "democracies" favored by the Reagan Administration: moderate civilian governments that share power with, but never threaten the interests of, strongly anti-Communist military establishments. Thousands of Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Honduran citizens have experienced firsthand the limits of these democracies: The rule of law stops at the barracks door. As long as officers responsible for the death, disappearance and torture of suspected government opponents are not punished for their crimes, or worse still, remain in control of those nations' armed forces, how can members of the opposition ever feel safe? And what is democratic about a country where government opponents fear for their lives? Since the court proceedings began, in June 1987, those witnesses who had the misfortune to reside in Honduras have felt the heat.

In June, a poster was plastered on buildings across Tegucigalpa, with the screaming headline, "COUNTRYMEN, THESE ARE THE PROMOTERS OF SUBVERSION IN OUR COUNTRY, THESE ARE THE TERRORIST DELINQUENTS AND THE CHANNEL OF ENTRY OF COMMUNISM IN HONDURAS. RECOGNIZE THEM!" The five Hondurans depicted were two leading officials of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Honduras (CODEH), Ramón Custodio and Miguel Angel Pavón, and three trade union leaders. CODEH was the original complainant in the Inter-American Court case, and both Custodio and Pavón were to testify before the court in September and October.

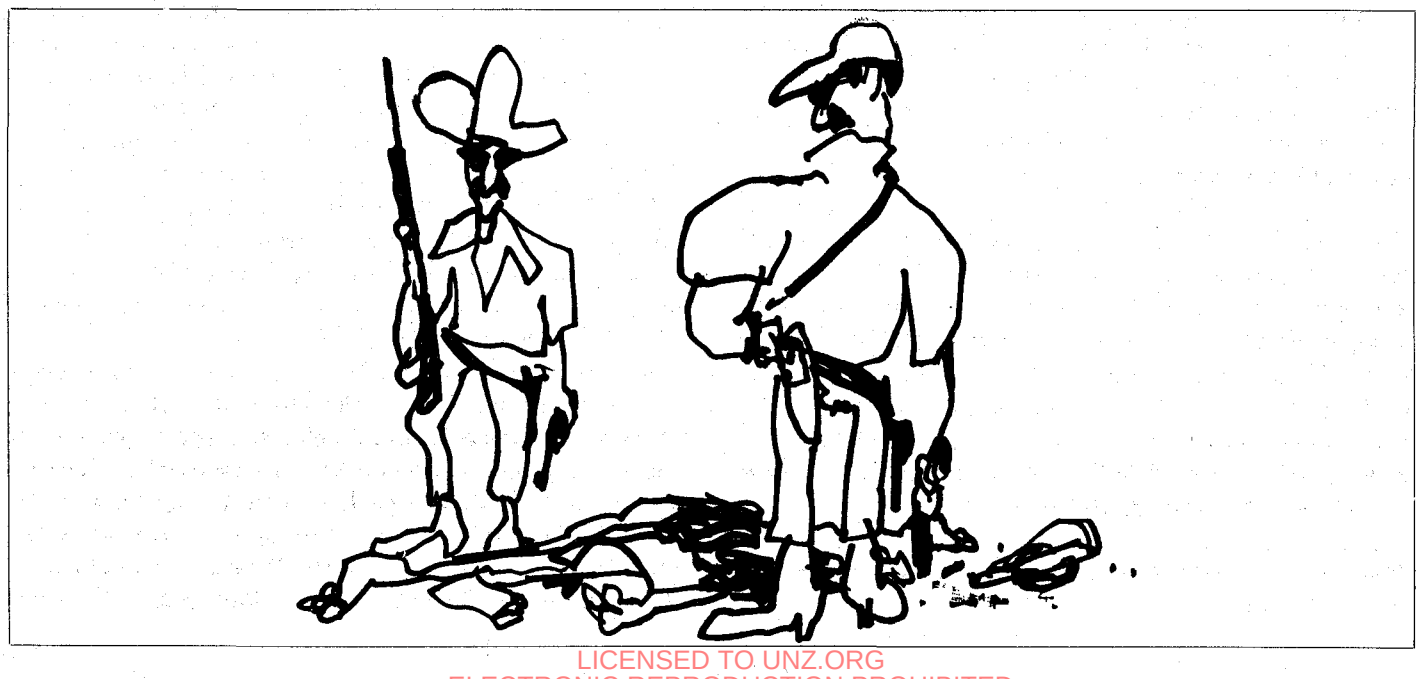
Since then, Custodio has received numerous reports from various sources with ties to the military that Battalion 316 has laid plans to kill him. The death squad reportedly held a meeting at the headquarters of the First Infantry Battalion on October 15, 1987, in which members agreed that Custodio should be murdered and his death made to appear accidental. Salvadoran advisers present at the meeting reportedly took on the assignment.

In October, shortly after he testified about his own abduction by security forces in 1982, Milton Jiménez, an attorney with the Human Rights Commission of the Honduran Bar Association, was told that retaliation would be taken against him and his family for his testimony.

On January 5, 1988, the day after Attorney General Rubén Darío Zepeda announced that three military officers subpoenaed by the court would in fact testify, José Isaías Vilorio, the first military witness scheduled, was gunned down at a bus stop in a suburb of Tegucigalpa. Vilorio, who at the time of his death worked in the personnel division of the investigations police (D.N.I.), was said to have kept the files for Battalion 316. Two witnesses also linked him to the kidnapping of Manfredo Velásquez, one of the four victims whose case is being heard.

Vilorio's assassins draped a flag with the insignia of the Cinchoneros Popular Liberation Front on the body and later sent a letter to a Honduran newspaper claiming responsibility on behalf of the guerrilla group. (Although guerrilla responsibility cannot be ruled out, diplomats in Honduras note the Cinchoneros, who have been virtually invisible in recent years, are well infiltrated by the Honduran military and could have been used as a cover for a military operation.)

That same week, Miguel Angel Pavón, the CODEH official who was also the first witness in the trial, received a black tie in the mail. An attached note advised him to wear the tie to his funeral. On January 14 Pavón and a friend,



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teachers' union official Moíses Landaverde, were shot to death as they chatted in a car in San Pedro Sula.

So far, there is no smoking gun establishing the author of these crimes, but put together they have the undeniable look of an orchestrated campaign to subvert the court case. On January 19 the court demanded that the Honduran government take effective measures to protect witnesses; begin judicial investigations of the threats against witnesses; investigate and prosecute the killers of José Isaías Vilorio and Miguel Angel Pavón. Honduran authorities were given until February 2 to report steps they have taken. On February 3 the Honduran government asked for an extension of the deadline. The court also demanded that the Honduran government "adopt concrete measures" to make it clear that any Honduran citizen is guaranteed the right to testify in the case by the American Convention on Human Rights.

The Reagan Administration shows no sign of remorse for its role in support of Battalion 316 and has issued no statement of concern about the violent efforts to derail the court action. Furthermore, ever since CODEH began denouncing disappearances in the early 1980s, the Administration has used every opportunity to discredit it and its director, Ramón Custodio. The 1986 State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, for example, described CODEH as an "antidemocratic leftist organization" guilty of "willful exaggerations or misrepresentations."

Meanwhile, the Administration continues trying to persuade Congress that U.S. aid to repressive police forces in Honduras and elsewhere is the best solution to deficiencies in the human rights field. (In keeping with this philosophy, a limited amount of aid was extended to Alexander Hernández's police officer training school in 1986.) In a January 19 statement, the State Department boasted that the Administration "is actively working to further respect for human rights . . . by providing human rights training to the security forces." Florencio Caballero, the Battalion 316 defector who testified before the Inter-American Court, has explained how effective such "human rights" advice was in the past. Battalion 316's C.I.A. instructors always told their Honduran pupils not to torture, Caballero recalls, so they were careful to conduct their torture sessions when the Americans weren't around.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights is expected to issue a verdict at its next meeting, in June. The emerging evidence strongly suggests that it will find Honduras guilty, and the court may impose damages or even mandate criminal prosecution of the perpetrators. Honduras could, of course, ignore the verdict, as the United States has ignored the judgment of the World Court. But armed with the ruling of an international court, the victims' kin would be empowered to seek enforcement from a court in any other country. And a poor nation like Honduras would be far more threatened by the status of international outlaw than the United States has been. Above all, a guilty verdict would be a strong signal to the world that a government cannot torture and murder its citizens and emerge unscathed. For the first time since the leaders of Argentina's murderous junta were jailed, government death squads may pay a price. ☐

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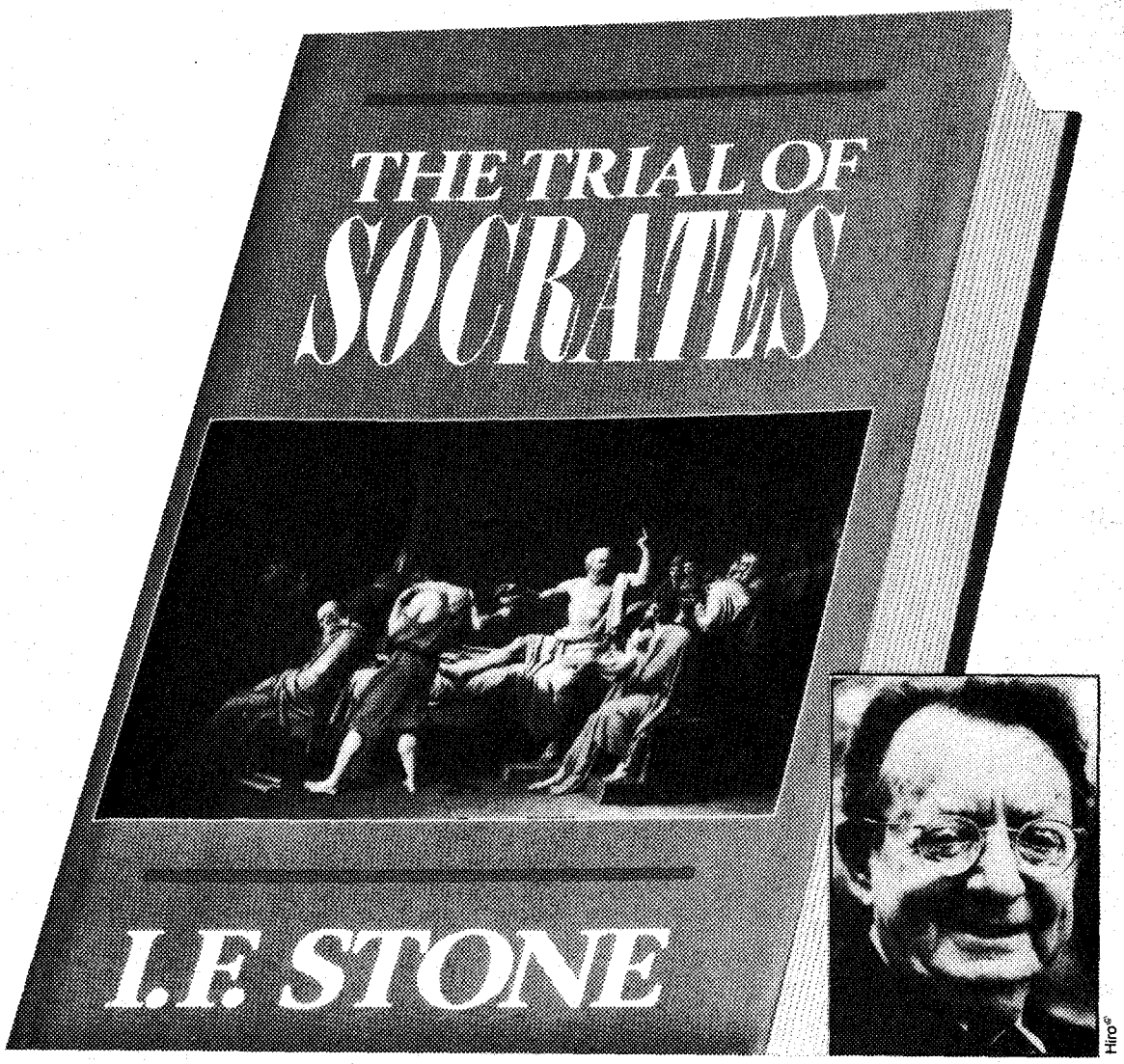
After 24 centuries: the case for the prosecution.



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AFGHAN PEACE FLURRIES

Can the Russians Find a Way Out?

AHMED RASHID

Islamabad, Pakistan

Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev's new offer to withdraw his country's 115,000 troops from Afghanistan caps a recent flurry of diplomatic activity, raising hopes that 1988 could become the year of peace after more than eight years of war. However, the negotiations are the most complex of any regional peace settlement since the United States withdrew from Vietnam. A number of obstacles stand in the way: The situation on the ground is immensely complicated, with the mujahedeen guerrillas riven by factional disputes, the attitude of the Pakistani government shifting unpredictably and strong indications that the United States may be trying to delay the peace process. Above all, there is still no agreement on the nature of the coalition government that would take power after a settlement.

Since the summit last December in Washington, the Soviet Union has issued a stream of the most positive peace statements since the December 1979 invasion. Gorbachev now says that he will be ready to start a troop pullout by May 15, assuming that an agreement is signed before March 15 in Geneva, where United Nations mediator Diego Cordovez has been conducting indirect peace talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan since 1982. Moscow has told Cordovez that the next round of talks "must be the last round." If a settlement is signed in Geneva, the last Soviet troops would leave Afghanistan by March 15, 1989.

The indefatigable Cordovez arrived here on January 20 to begin his crucial shuttle between Islamabad and Kabul. He now appears to have few problems in bridging the gap on the timetable for a Soviet troop withdrawal—Pakistan has demanded an eight-month timetable; the official Soviet position is twelve months, but there have been hints since the summit that this could be reduced. Nor are the nuts and bolts of the withdrawal expected to create difficulties. Both the United States and Pakistan are insisting on a "front-end loaded timetable," one with 50 percent of the Soviet forces leaving in the first three months. Although the details remain to be worked out, Gorbachev now appears to have accepted that principle. "That too could be done," he said. "The Afghan leadership and we agree to it."

Before Cordovez arrived, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman claimed the Geneva package had been "virtually coordinated." The entire package covers the repatriation of the 5 million Afghan refugees, a promise to end outside aid to the guerrillas, a nonaligned Afghanistan and a Soviet pullout. Gorbachev's February 8 announcement suggests that Moscow has reached an agreement with the Reagan Administration on linking a Soviet withdrawal with a halt to U.S. aid to the Afghan guerrillas.

However, all parties remain miles apart on the crucial issue of the coalition government that would replace President Najibullah. The Russians spent most of 1987 trying to convince the world that the best formula was Najibullah's policy of national reconciliation, which asked mujahedeen leaders to join a coalition government with the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (P.D.P.A.). But national reconciliation, a modern version of the united front tactics used by the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe after World War II, was a dismal failure. The refugees did not return, and the guerrillas responded by stepping up the fighting. It proved untenable for the Russians to insist that the P.D.P.A. remain the backbone of any coalition.

Since the summit, Moscow has significantly abandoned its demand for a P.D.P.A.-dominated coalition as a precondition of withdrawal. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said in Madrid on January 21 that Moscow now wanted "the broadest-based coalition government in Kabul." He continued, "No one has the right to doubt that Afghanistan's pain is also our pain."

The Soviet Union appears to have no intention of letting the United States or Pakistan sabotage this initiative by demanding the total exclusion of P.D.P.A. members from a transitional regime. Few doubt that the recent Soviet relief of the Afghan Army garrison town of Khost, twenty miles from the Pakistani border, and bombing attacks by Afghan agents inside Pakistan were less than discreet reminders to President Zia ul-Haq that Moscow will unleash fire and brimstone along the border if Pakistan stalls on a settlement as a result of U.S. pressure. "This is our last chance for a settlement," one Pakistani official told me. "We have to take it, but we have to convince the Americans, because we cannot make a move without them."

Zia has now taken personal charge of the Afghan negotiations. He has a deep ideological commitment to the Islamic fundamentalist wing of the guerrillas, which he will have to put behind him in order for the peace process to advance. However, U.S. officials who accompanied Under Secretary of State Michael Armacost to Islamabad in January privately told Pakistani journalists that the White House's advice to Pakistan was to delay the next round of talks in Geneva until the future Kabul government is worked out to Washington's satisfaction. U.S. leverage over Pakistan has been enhanced by President Reagan's certification to Congress that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device, despite a State Department report released in December that cast doubt on this. Reagan's pledge clears the way for disbursement of a $480 million aid package to Pakistan for 1988.

Washington still appears to have no coherent Afghan policy. "The Soviets have caught the Americans completely off guard," a European diplomat in Islamabad told me. "U.S. policy is in a shambles—they don't know what they

Ahmed Rashid is a Pakistani journalist and the Pakistan/Afghanistan correspondent for The Independent *and* The Observer *of London.*

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want." President Reagan has to convince the Afghan guerrillas, as well as hawks in Washington, that he does not intend a sellout to the Russians. After Armacost's meeting with guerrilla leaders in Islamabad, Syed Ahmad Gailani, head of the National Islamic Front, one of the three moderate members of the seven-party guerrilla Alliance, told me, "The U.S. has explicitly assured us that they will not cut any deal with the Soviets behind our backs, and that no settlement can take place which is not to our full satisfaction."

The acute division between the moderate parties and the four Islamic fundamentalist groups—the latter have received the bulk of U.S. aid—has deepened as the peace talks progress. Younis Khalis, present head of the Alliance and chief of the fundamentalist Hezbe Islami group, has called Diego Cordovez a "Soviet puppet" and condemned the entire U.N. peace process. Until February 6, when the two men met for the first time in Peshawar, Khalis had refused a meeting.

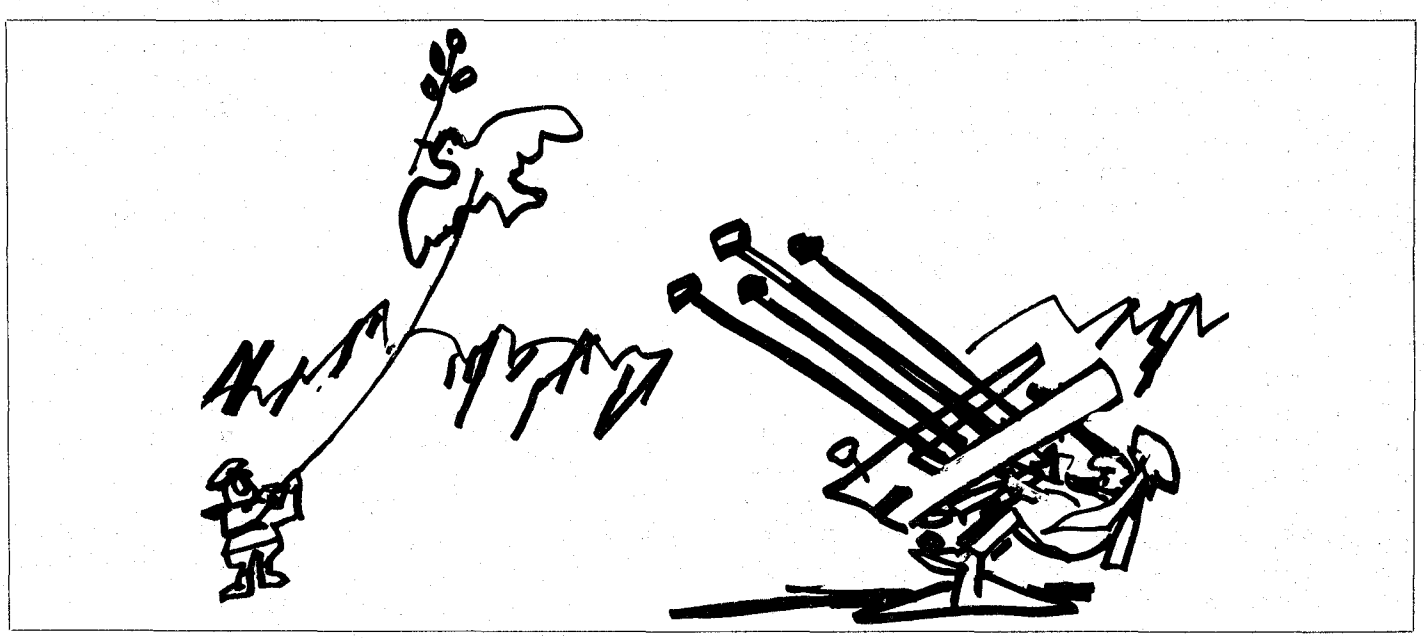
The seven Alliance parties are united on only two things: an unconditional Soviet withdrawal and direct talks with Moscow. They are divided over everything else, especially the question of a coalition government. Publicly, even the moderates refuse to deal with Najibullah; privately, they have said that some less well-known P.D.P.A. members might find a place in a transitional regime. The moderates also back the return of the 73-year-old King of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, who has been in exile in Rome since 1973. In the refugee camps and several of the guerrilla groups, he is viewed as the most acceptable compromise candidate to head a future coalition, the only person who commands enough respect to stave off a postsettlement civil war. Kabul and Moscow have both endorsed the King, but he says he refuses to return to Afghanistan to participate in a Communist-dominated government.

The fundamentalists despise the King, however, convinced that his secularism was the root cause of Soviet influence in Afghanistan. American, Saudi and Pakistani backing for the fundamentalists (from October 1986 to February 1987 they were the only guerrilla groups that received Stinger antiaircraft missiles in significant numbers) has always been criticized by the other Afghan parties as well as by moderates in Pakistan's establishment. "It is the moderates who will eventually compromise and agree to a settlement," one Pakistani official said privately, "but the U.S. has built up fundamentalist power on the battlefield to such an extent that they can ruin any settlement."

There is a widespread belief among Pakistani analysts and European diplomats here that the fundamentalists' rejection of the U.N. process, a coalition government or indeed any compromise has been encouraged by Washington, buying time for U.S. policy-makers to devise a clear-cut policy. Cordovez finally made the breakthrough in his effort to meet with the guerrillas only after President Zia had brought pressure on Alliance chief Younis Khalis. Cordovez told the guerrillas of the importance he attaches to the resistance forming a coalition government. "The Afghans must make a government of their choice," he told me in an interview.

Cordovez's main mission on his present shuttle is to bridge differences over the coalition issue, and for the first time both he and Pakistan's government have put forward separate, detailed proposals to solve this intractable problem. Senior Pakistani officials say the new Cordovez plan calls for a conference and direct talks in Geneva between the P.D.P.A., the guerrillas and Afghan exiles in the West, notably King Zahir Shah. Officials refused to disclose the conditions that Cordovez would place on such a meeting, but they are believed to be that no party would claim a monopoly of power and that the interim coalition would remain in office only for as long as it took to supervise a Soviet withdrawal and organize national elections.

The Pakistani proposal, meanwhile, is to hold a *jirga*—a tribal council—preferably inside Afghanistan. This would include the same three groups, "with the exiles and Zahir Shah acting as a cushion between the two warring parties," according to one official. President Zia told *The New York Times* on January 21 that he thought all parties should agree to a one-third share of power in the interim coalition government.



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This proposal, the first concrete Pakistani initiative after almost a year of silence, was almost ditched overnight by Zia. While Cordovez took both the U.N. and Pakistani proposals to Kabul, Zia gave an interview to *The Washington Post*, on January 24, saying that he would refuse to sign any accord with Najibullah. With a furious Cordovez threatening to walk out of the talks, embarrassed Pakistani officials quickly backtracked and reiterated their desire for power-sharing. Some officials say Zia gave the interview because his earlier comments to *The Times* had provoked adverse reactions among right-wing Congressmen in Washington.

There is still no evidence that the United States and Pakistan are using their considerable clout with the fundamentalists to persuade them to agree to power-sharing, a notion they reject utterly. The irony of all this is that, since 1982, the Russians had insisted on their withdrawal being linked to a new interim regime in Kabul. They have now dropped that linkage, raising the possibility that they might simply walk out of Afghanistan without caring what happened in Kabul. It is now Pakistan and the United States who seem keen on a linked agreement, fearing that anything less would lead to a bloodbath in Kabul, with the civil war continuing and the 3 million refugees in Pakistan staying put. Pakistan and the United States have now suggested to Cordovez that the February round of talks in Geneva be delayed until the coalition issue is resolved. It is precisely this kind of "deal," worked out between the United States, the Soviet Union, Pakistan and the Kabul regime, that makes the guerrillas most suspicious.

The divisions within the rebel groups are paralleled by equally acute splits within the P.D.P.A. and Najibullah's continued inability to broaden his power base. Neither the guerrilla Alliance nor Najibullah can claim a real popular mandate from the Afghan people, and the frustration of both superpowers with the faction they back will make a settlement doubly difficult.

Adding fuel to the fire are Iran, China and Saudi Arabia. Iran, which is home to more than 1 million Afghan refugees, has armed and supported Afghan Shiite groups. Radio Teheran recently condemned the U.N. process, accusing both superpowers of plotting a deal over Afghanistan and urging the guerrillas to fight to the finish. Teheran's assent is vital to making any settlement work, but there is no indication that the Iranians will oblige.

China has been the guerrillas' main supplier of small arms. In a deal worked out in 1980, the United States bought small arms, mines and rocket launchers from China as part of its covert supply operation to the mujahedeen. China also has its own aid program, channeled directly through Pakistan.

The Saudis, meanwhile, have backed the fundamentalists to the tune of $250 million a year, and even if the United States halted its assistance as part of a settlement, Saudi Arabia could keep up its clandestine support, creating problems for any coalition in Kabul. Washington has frequently used Saudi money to fund Third World groups and could do so again in Afghanistan.

The battle for Khost at the end of last year was the largest set piece of the entire war, evidence that both sides have chosen to escalate the conflict even as the momentum

THE PRESS ON AFGHANISTAN

U.S. press coverage of the war in Afghanistan has given a seriously misleading picture of American, guerrilla and Soviet actions. Reports of the recent battle for Khost, a key garrison town close to the Pakistan border, are a case in point. In early November some 10,000 guerrillas used freshly supplied U.S. long-range artillery and mine-clearing equipment to launch a full-scale assault on Khost. Soviet troops responded two weeks later with a counteroffensive to break the siege. U.S. reporters ignored Khost until after the December Washington summit, when they depicted the Soviet drive as an aggressive and irrational attack that contradicted promises of an early withdrawal. *The Washington Post*, relying on Defense Department sources, called the counterattack "puzzling."

The guerrillas were finally pushed back from Khost, not only by overwhelming Soviet firepower but also because open fights broke out among rival guerrilla commanders around the town. Yet U.S. journalists have downplayed that story, concentrating instead on the only areas where guerrilla unity is real. A series by *The Post*'s Anthony Davis in late December gave a glowing report of life in the Panjsher Valley in northern Afghanistan controlled by the Jamiat-i-Islami group. A December 26 report spoke of "a new type of guerrilla force," emphasizing "group unity and discipline." A long article four days later described a sophisticated civil administration with social services, schools and clinics.

Journalists have been more negligent in covering the conduct of the violently sectarian fundamentalist group Hezbe Islami, the largest single recipient of U.S. military aid and the first group to receive Stinger anti-aircraft missiles. What finally drew the press's attention to Hezbe was not, however, the issue of U.S. support for Islamic extremists but the group's attacks on Western civilians. Last autumn, in an apparent attempt to stop aid supplies from reaching areas controlled by competing groups, Hezbe kidnapped ten French doctors and relief workers; evidence also suggests that Hezbe troops murdered French aid coordinator Thierry Niquet and, most recently, British television cameraman Andy Skrzypkowiak. Hezbe spokesmen in Peshawar have consistently denied these charges. A.R.

Research assistance provided by Laura H. Crosby.

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toward peace talks increases. But it is a war of prolonged stalemate. The Russians cannot be humiliated; they are not about to suffer a Dien Bien Phu. At the same time, the guerrillas cannot be crushed.

A peace settlement is now possible, but only if all parties demonstrate good will and compromise. Any agreement in Geneva on a Soviet withdrawal would be worthless if it led only to a bloody civil war between the moderate and fundamentalist wings of the guerrillas, and between them and the P.D.P.A. The Russians have made the decision to withdraw, and they should be helped to do so. After suffering 1 million casualties and losing 5 million refugees, the Afghan people need peace more than anyone else. □

The 'Negotiators' Vs. The 'Bleeders'

JEFFERSON MORLEY

Reagan Administration officials can't agree among themselves about whether to accept the latest Soviet offer to end the war in Afghanistan. While the Russians have unilaterally dropped most of their major demands, the United States has not devised a clear response. On one side, the "negotiators" in the Administration are edging toward a settlement of the eight-year-old war. On the other, the "bleeders," as they have been dubbed by Selig Harrison, want to inflict as much damage as possible on the Soviet Union. Harrison is a senior associate of the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The recent Soviet moves toward a rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan caught the Administration by surprise. "We don't know what U.S. policy is," says Harrison. "The surface indications are that the U.S. will sign on" to an agreement made at the forthcoming Geneva talks. But, Harrison cautions, "there is still a big fight going on" between the negotiators and the bleeders.

The negotiators are led by Under Secretary of State Michael Armacost, who conferred with Pakistani officials in January. Secretary of State George Shultz seems to be playing his familiar role of being dragged into an ideological fray he would rather stay above. Harrison says Armacost has the support of the National Security Council. Opposition is said to center in middle-level officials in the Defense Department and the White House. Harrison says Under Secretary of Defense Fred Iklé, who announced his resignation on January 16, "has been fighting a rear-guard action" against any settlement.

Another prominent opponent of any talk of settlement is Elie Krakowski, head of the office of regional defense in the Pentagon's international security affairs division. Writing last spring in *The National Interest*, the house organ of Reagan foreign policy specialists, Krakowski contended that the Russians were preparing to annex several Afghan provinces. "The objective [of Soviet diplomacy]," Krakowski argued, "is to make the outside world believe that some 'minor' concessions on its part would resolve the problem."

The fight between the two factions in Washington focuses on the concessions that the Russians are now demanding from Pakistan and the United States. "The touchy issue is, Are we urging the resistance to get into a coalition government?" says Steve Sestanovich, director of Soviet Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former Soviet specialist on the N.S.C. "That won't sell." Others say the most crucial question is the timing of the cessation of United States aid to the rebels. The Russians, according to Francis Fukuyama, a former policy analyst in the Reagan State Department who is now a senior staff member at the Rand Corporation, want the U.S. cutoff to occur before they withdraw, "to make sure that the situation doesn't crumble as they are leaving." Rebel supporters say they want the Russians to withdraw first.

According to two former Administration officials familiar with Afghanistan policy, Armacost agreed on his most recent trip to a halt in U.S. aid simultaneous with the beginning of a Soviet withdrawal. When Armacost returned to Washington, the bureaucratic opposition counterattacked. "As I understand it," says Fukuyama, "Shultz had to backtrack and deny that [an early aid cutoff] was what was offered."

A negotiated settlement would have to contend also with hostility on Capitol Hill, where two men hold sway on Afghan policy: Texas Democratic Representative Charles Wilson and New Hampshire Republican Senator Gordon Humphrey. In 1984, Wilson forced through the appropriation of more than double the Administration's request for aid to the Afghan rebels—over the objections of many top Central Intelligence Agency officials. Wilson defined his goal at that time as bleeding the Soviet Union: "There were 58,000 dead in Vietnam and we owe the Russians one."

Wilson's administrative assistant, Charles Schnabel, says that his boss "views U.S. participation [in supporting the Afghan rebels] as a tremendous investment of time, money and technology. He wants to see that we support that investment, protect it." The Reagan Administration has arranged at least $1.2 billion in multilateral arms aid for various Afghan resistance groups and provided at least another $1.4 billion in Congressional C.I.A. appropriations.

The Afghan resistance is by far the biggest dollar investment of the Reagan doctrine. That fact—perhaps more than the diplomatic details—is at the heart of the Administration's indecision. To enter into a negotiated settlement of the Afghan war, regardless of its merits, would be viewed as a humiliating climb down, especially after the defeat last week of *contra* aid.

"We're not going to have a solution that leaves us with our last people leaving Kabul on the struts of helicopters," one Soviet official was quoted as saying last September. With all its echoes of Saigon 1975, that scenario would not displease the mid-level officials who seem to be shaping current U.S. policy. If they can force a bureaucratic stalemate, the war will drag on, a victory by default for the "bleeders." □

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Bob Dole

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

liberal. "I think you can be a conservative and still be sensitive and compassionate," Dole told an interviewer last month. But close scrutiny of the record reveals he is exaggerating his past support of "sensitive and compassionate" legislation and is trying to rewrite history regarding his controversial early Senate years.

Upon his election to the Senate, Dole assumed the lonely burden of defending Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy, a task he performed with bitter determination. "I began on the floor reminding colleagues just who had won the 1968 election," he writes in *The Doles*, glossing over those hawkish days in four brief paragraphs. He adds: "There's nothing wrong with partisanship as long as it's constructive and doesn't descend to the level of personalities." But his Vietnam cheerleading deserves more than this tame description. Dole was a major protagonist in the debates on various antiwar measures, fighting efforts to limit the conflict and often resorting to the type of personal attack he now eschews. He repeatedly denounced Senator George McGovern and echoed Vice President Spiro Agnew's virulent assaults on media coverage of the war.

Dole's labors for Nixon paid off. In January 1971 he was tagged by the President to chair the Republican National Committee, and he held the job for two years. He led his party through the 1972 elections and the initial shock waves of Watergate. In his autobiography, Dole tries to show that when it came to dirty tricks and mean-spirited maneuvers, he was out of the loop. For instance, he notes with pride that he refused to read a speech declaring that *The Washington Post*'s Watergate coverage was motivated by publisher Katherine Graham's alleged personal hatred of Nixon. But Dole 1972 wasn't so honorable. He constantly accused *The Post* of fronting for McGovern and shifting attention away from that candidate's "radical positions and politics." "The greatest scandal of this campaign," he said, "is the brazen manner in which, without benefit of clergy, *The Washington Post* has set up housekeeping with the McGovern campaign." Dole 1988 says he spent 1972 assailing only McGovern's policies, but Dole 1972 sought to divert the public from Watergate by hurling false and misleading charges about McGovern's campaign finances.

Dole's big Watergate lie concerns a payment he received from the Committee To Re-Elect the President (CREEP) slush fund. In *The Doles* he repeats his favorite one-liner about Watergate: "The break-in at the DNC occurred on my night off." And in 1973 he told reporters in Kansas, "Most of the people at C.R.P. headquarters did not know who I was." But during the Watergate hearings, Hugh Sloan, CREEP's treasurer, testified that in 1971 Dole received $3,000 from CREEP to pay for a visit to Vietnam.

The idea behind the payment was that a trip to Vietnam would enhance Dole's credentials as an advocate of Nixon's war policy, a CREEP memorandum said. If asked about funding for the trip, the memo noted, Dole would reply that a private source had underwritten it. But, according to a *Congressional Quarterly* accounting of Congressional travel that year, Dole declared that he had visited Vietnam at his personal expense. Although Dole obviously had some knowledge of a secret campaign account, Senate Watergate investigators never questioned him. Three months after Sloan testified, Dole introduced a resolution to shut down the televised Senate Watergate hearings. (The move failed.)

Dole 1988 also ignores his involvement in the 1972 I.T.T. scandal. The way Dole now remembers it, the Republican National Committee legal counsel discovered that I.T.T., which was involved in an antitrust case then pending before the Justice Department, owned a San Diego hotel that was to be one of the financial guarantors of the Republicans' nominating convention—to the tune of $400,000. That was a potential conflict of interest, says Dole 1988, so the convention was moved from San Diego to Miami.

Now for the facts. In February 1972, columnist Jack Anderson revealed a memo, written by I.T.T. lobbyist Dita Beard, suggesting that the company's offer of the $400,000 was intended to induce a favorable antitrust ruling. The next month Dole acknowledged that he had known about I.T.T.'s proposition, but he denied there was any quid pro quo. Two years later, however, when he was running for re-election, *The Kansas City Times* quoted him as saying he had not known at all of I.T.T.'s offer. Dole was not called to testify before the Senate committee that investigated the affair.

Dole's self-serving faulty recall, replete with lies of omission and impression, prompts the question, If a candidate can be pummeled for shaving a few years off his age, what price should be paid for dissembling about more significant biographical information?

In the 1970s, Dole compiled a voting record to please the staunchest conservative. He opposed the Consumer Protection Agency, mass-transit funding, the Freedom of Information Act, hospital cost-containment legislation, restrictions on nuclear plant licenses, the windfall profits tax on oil companies, an effective Occupational Safety and Health Administration, stiffer penalties for labor law violations, a 50 percent cut in business meal tax deductions and assorted campaign finance reform measures.

Like a good conservative, Dole supported military spending and most weapons programs, including the neutron bomb. Dole was a strident opponent of busing. He urged closer ties with Taiwan, tried to shut down the U.S. interest section in Havana and marshaled the opposition to the Panama Canal treaties.

But after winning a close and acrimonious re-election contest in 1974, Dole began to soften the edges of his hard-right record. He returned to the Senate and forged an alliance with his old archnemesis George McGovern on food stamps. As the ranking Republican member of the Senate Nutrition and Human Needs Committee, Dole, backed by McGovern, proposed reforming the food stamp program to make it more accessible. "This was the single most beneficial change in the program's history," said a lobbyist for food stamps. With McGovern,

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Dole pushed a $2.7 billion school lunch bill.

These kinds of programs do benefit the food producers of Dole's Kansas. But food stamp advocates discount this as his sole motivation, noting that his attachment to the program seems genuine. Dole has also helped farmers more directly. In 1978 he pushed through a successful $3 billion farm bill. Seven years later, while in the midst of putting together an austere deficit-reduction plan, Dole engineered passage of a $52 billion farm bill. He also sheds his cold warrior armor when the issue is wheat sales to the Soviet Union.

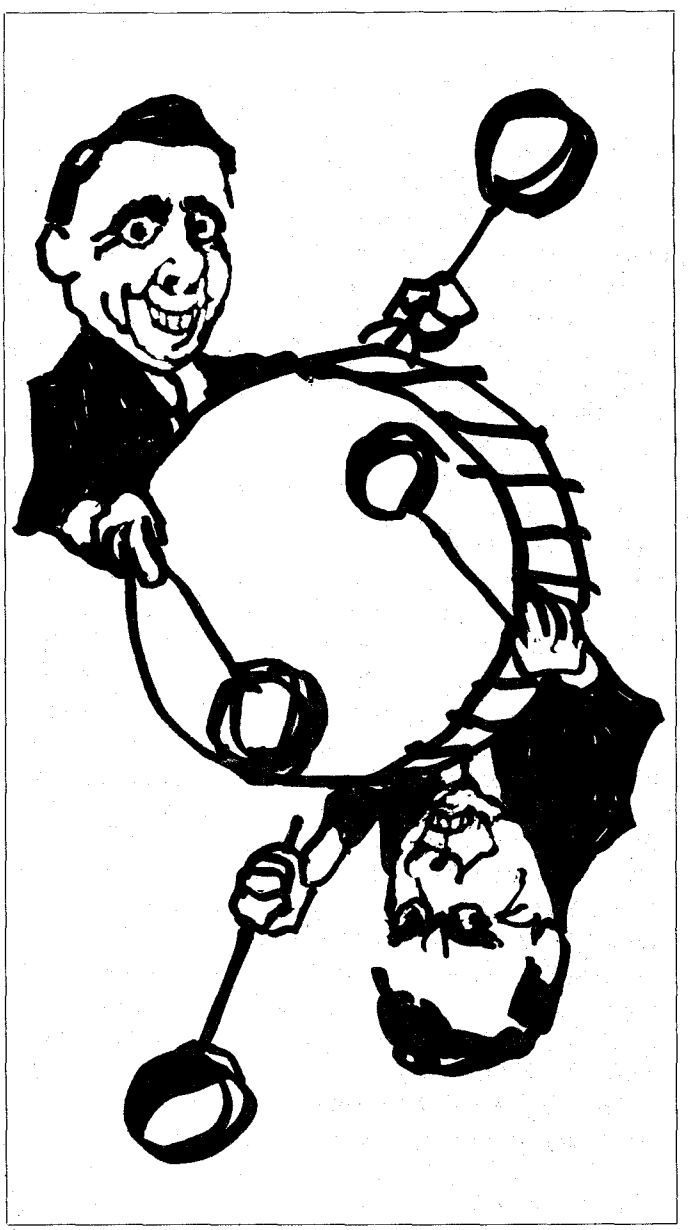
Dole's advocacy of food stamps is now part of the image of compassionate conservatism he projects on the campaign trail. "I'm not going to let somebody go hungry or homeless in America," Dole 1988 pledged recently. "If there's nobody else to do it, the Federal government is going to do it." His presidential "vision" encompasses "bringing in the disabled and others who have been left out in the cold." However, Dole's past eight years in the Senate—where he served as chair of the powerful Finance Committee from 1981 to 1985 and then as majority leader from 1985 to 1987—offer evidence of the Scrooge within.

"One of the peculiar things about Bob Dole is that if you look at him on food programs and then look at him on other low-income issues, the story is not the same," said an advocate for poverty programs, who, like most lobbyists interviewed, requested anonymity. "Most of what he says about his food stamps record is true, but it doesn't carry over into other areas. I have seen occasions when the Administration proposes some cuts in A.F.D.C. [Aid to Families With Dependent Children] and food stamps. You can talk to him on food stamps, but not on A.F.D.C. He has a particular feeling about food stamps that is not necessarily transferred to other areas."

Dole's loyalty to food stamps was tested during Reagan's first term, as he fought off the efforts of the White House and Senator Jesse Helms to slice huge chunks from the program's budget. After 1984 "something happened" regarding food stamps, recalled the food stamp lobbyist. "During the 1985 reauthorization of food stamps, Dole sat there like a bump on a log through a lot of the fights. He was a different guy. He clearly did not want to offend Helms. He even voted with Helms on some measures that we thought would hurt the program." If Dole has pulled back from his commitment to the hungry, what about the disabled, the homeless and the others left out?

The disabled. Dole's election to the White House would be in itself a positive symbol for the physically disabled, Dole says. He's right. During combat in World War II, he was severely injured and now can barely use his right arm. Disability rights advocates generally commend Dole's work on a measure passed last year that prohibits airlines from discriminating against the disabled and praise his support of tax breaks for institutions that make their buildings accessible to wheelchairs. But some have been disappointed in recent years by Dole's promotion of a narrower version of the proposed Civil Rights Restoration Act. (This law would overturn the 1984 Supreme Court *Grove City College v. Bell* decision, which limits the reach of civil rights laws barring recipients of Federal funds from discriminating against women, minorities, the elderly and the disabled.) But on January 29, Dole voted against the limited measure, a move that indicates he supports the broader bill.

The homeless. The homeless problem is a housing problem, and Dole has been no friend of Federal housing programs. In 1981, Dole voted against a measure that reaffirmed the government's role in housing and opposed Reagan's proposals to end virtually all Federal support for housing. Last April, Dole was one of eighty-five senators to support $423 million in emergency food, shelter and health programs for the homeless. But ten days before that vote, he was one of twenty-seven who refused to back a more significant $31.2 billion two-year housing bill. About half the bill's funds were earmarked for lower-income housing assistance programs. Housing advocates considered this a lean, no-frills bill that would prevent homelessness. To Dole it was "yet another budget-buster."



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The others left out. A key part of Dole's caring Republican liturgy is civil rights. Dole is justifiably proud of his vital role in extending the Voting Rights Act in 1982. He was floor manager for the legislation that made Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a national holiday and he supported voting rights for residents of Washington, D.C., another item on the civil rights agenda. Dole has twice filed briefs in civil rights cases before the Supreme Court, opposing the rollback arguments of Reagan's Justice Department. "On civil rights issues, Robert Dole generally has a good record," said one civil rights lobbyist. "He doesn't just vote correctly, he takes a leadership role. But one has to remember that he is a conservative Republican." Put less politely, one reason he looks good on civil rights is that he is a Republican; there's not much competition on his side of the aisle.

In 1980, Dole voted against strengthening laws banning discrimination in housing—the major civil rights legislation before the Ninety-sixth Congress. In 1986, as majority leader, he used some questionable, if not dishonorable, parliamentary maneuvers to secure the approval of conservative Donald Manion to the U.S. Court of Appeals—one of the top civil rights struggles of 1986.

Dole has also let down antidiscrimination advocates in other instances. In 1983 the fight to extend the Civil Rights Commission ended up in a Dole-brokered compromise. Pro-commission lobbyists believed the agreement guaranteed that two commissioners who had been highly critical of Reagan would be reappointed. But the White House reneged and booted the pair out, after which Dole would not confirm the agreement publicly. "Dole was very cautious in response," recalled one civil rights lobbyist. "He would not criticize the White House. We were disappointed he was not stronger."

On September 8, 1985, Dole announced he would delay a vote on sanctions against South Africa. Even though he backed the bill, Dole supported a filibuster against it to protect Reagan, who opposed the sanctions. The bill failed, but Dole persuaded Reagan to issue an executive order that incorporated parts of the legislation. The following year, Dole criticized Reagan's policy of constructive engagement, maintaining that the United States' relationship with South Africa is a "domestic civil rights issue." Switching back the next month, he tried (unsuccessfully) to block a new sanctions bill and then to sustain the President's veto. Endorsing sanctions, he proclaimed, was a "feel-good vote" for a "feel-good foreign policy."

Dole's record is similarly mixed regarding what are considered women's issues. As early as 1966 he was in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment. But a dozen years later he voted against extending the ratification deadline for states and in favor of allowing them to rescind their ratification. Recently, Dole promised that if elected, "I'm going to have a day-care program. We've got a lot of low- and middle-income women with no place to take their children. I also want to encourage the private sector to get into day care." Seven years ago, Dole did vote, with ninety-three other senators, for a child-care tax credit; but in 1984 he turned his

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thumb down on a modest $45 million three-year program to establish after-school child-care demonstration projects. This year Dole is not among the thirty-one senators sponsoring a major $2.5 billion child-care bill.

Despite his staunch stand against abortion, Dole manages to win some praise among lobbyists for women's issues. Patricia Reuss, legislative director of Women's Equity Action League, credits him for shepherding through the Retirement Equity Act of 1983, which broadened spousal rights. She also noted his support of the women, infant and children (WIC) nutrition program, his help in ending the "widow's tax" and his advocacy of strong child-support enforcement measures. "Every WEAL member," Reuss added, "sees him as someone who has worked for our issues."

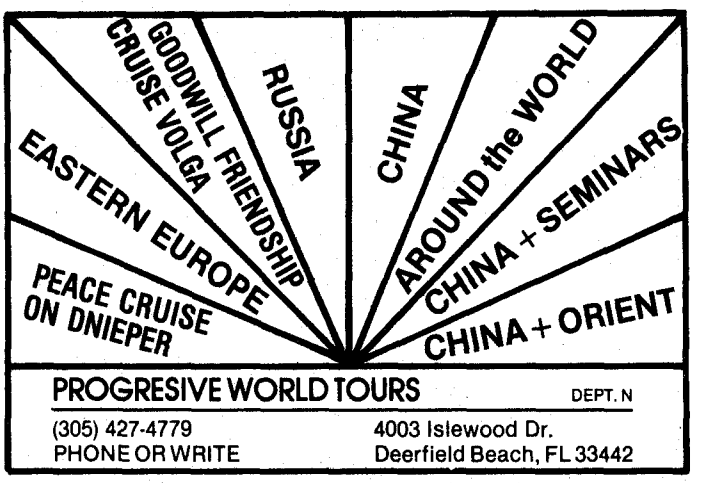
"It's very easy for him to take on the issue of reforms in the private sector," another lobbyist for women's issues explained. "But on social issues the question is, Are you asking anyone to pay for them?" Then Dole—with some exceptions—becomes a run-of-the-mill conservative. In addition to being stingy on day care, Dole has said no to Federal assistance to shelters for battered women. The measure was also opposed by the Moral Majority, which called it governmental interference in family matters.

Much of Dole's time in the Senate since 1980 has been spent on tax-related matters. The tax bills of 1981 and 1982, the shoring up of Social Security in 1983, the Tax Reform Act of 1986—these are the accomplishments that Dole cites in his autobiography and on the hustings as tangible evidence of his competence and leadership ability. He rightfully takes credit for cleaning up some of Reagan's fiscal mess. But it's a mess that Dole himself helped create.

For more than seven years, Dole has been decrying the deficit; it's the dominant theme of his campaign. Like most Republicans, he points to spending—not the 1981 Reagan tax cut and consequent military budget increases—as the prime culprit. But in *The Doles* he writes of the 25 percent three-year tax cut he helped pass: "Only later would anyone ask aloud whether the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 was too much of a good thing."

Dole forgets that two weeks after the 1980 election he warned that Reagan's tax proposal could lead to worrisome budget deficits. Nevertheless, he announced, he would set his concerns aside and support the tax cut. "I made it clear . . . that I would be [Reagan's] ball carrier on the Senate Finance Committee," writes Dole, who now disparages George Bush's go-with-the-flow vice presidency.

The 1981 tax cut, which greatly reduced the tab for the well-heeled and large corporations, was the cornerstone of Reagan's economic policy. Then came the 1982 tax bill, an admission on Dole's part that the previous year's measure had gone too far. As "People & Taxes," a newsletter published by Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, put it in 1982, "In 1981, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Robert Dole played an important role in passing the worst tax bill in history. In 1982, Robert Dole was the architect of the best tax reform bill in memory. Will the real Bob Dole please stand up." The 1982 measure, "People & Taxes" said,



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IN THE MAINSTREAM OF MARXIST THOUGHT

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"was essentially a tax reformer's delight, as it mainly raised taxes on wealthy individuals and closed corporate loopholes." For masterminding the tax increase—which he had to sell to Reagan—Dole was lionized in Washington as "the new Bob Dole," a pragmatist, a moderate, a mainstream Republican. Noting his work on the tax bill, the Voting Rights Act and food stamps, *The Baltimore Sun* in August 1982 declared it already "The Year of Bob Dole." Although Dole fared embarrassingly during his 1980 bid for President—he collected only 608 votes in New Hampshire—he was once again presidential timber.

But did Dole simply watch the train crash in 1981 and then move in to pick up the pieces? "My own guess is that Dole had beliefs, that were not totally firm, that the '81 bill would cause problems," remarked William Diefendorfer, who was chief of staff for the Finance Committee in 1985 and 1986. "He then came to the realization that the loophole openings were harmful." Diefendorfer applauds Dole's willingness to acknowledge that mistakes were made. Nevertheless, if Dole believed in 1981 that the tax cut was unsound, he could have provided an example of true leadership by speaking out, even though that was the unpopular course.

In 1986 Dole was a major force behind the Tax Reform Act. At first skittish about the tax overhaul, Dole then threw his weight behind the bill, which greatly increased its prospects. As finally approved, the bill drastically lowered tax rates for individuals, raised corporate taxes and removed millions of the working poor from the tax rolls.

Dole has laced his fight against tax breaks with doses of prairie populism. In 1982 he promised that Gucci-wearing corporate lobbyists would "all be barefoot by the time we're done." That year one such lobbyist complained, "I can't figure the guy out. Last year he pushed the tax bill through with all the skill you could want, but this year he's way out in left field. He acts like he has to atone for last year." On the campaign trail, Dole now lashes out at rich and powerful tax dodgers. "I've closed a lot of loopholes," he bragged recently. "And if I find somebody's getting an unintended tax break, some big company or some big individual, I'll close it."

Dole may have enraged the Gucci-clad by stealing away their loopholes, but he has also been a leading recipient of campaign funds and honorariums from business special interests. And rhetoric aside, Dole has done his share of special-interest back-scratching: He has, for example, gone to the mat for the tobacco industry [see Corn, "Bob Dole and the Tobacco Connection," *The Nation*, March 28, 1987]. During the drafting of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, Dole was one of several Senate Finance Committee members who plotted successfully to win a tax break for oil producers. He later sponsored a so-called transition rule that provided a deduction for owners of light aircraft. (Not coincidentally, Kansas is home to Cessna.) Dole, a hot item on the convention speaking circuit, also offered a provision that aided the convention and hotel industries. Dubbed the "Marriott amendment," it allows business meals at conventions to be fully deductible, whereas only 80 percent of the average working lunch may be deducted.

Most notorious are the various breaks he has tried to provide to domestic producers of ethanol, a byproduct of corn, used in gasohol. A prime beneficiary of this favoritism has been Archer-Daniels-Midland, a firm run by Dole's pal Dwayne Andreas. In 1980 Dole proposed a 40-cent-a-gallon tax on ethyl alcohol imports. Representative Charles Vanik charged this was no more than a giveaway to A.D.M., which then controlled about 75 percent of the domestic ethanol market. (A *Wall Street Journal* article last fall noted that Andreas, his relatives and A.D.M.-related groups have contributed about $130,000 to Dole's campaign and charitable efforts and that Dole often has hitched rides on A.D.M. corporate aircraft.) Dole has repeatedly denied that the Andreas connection fuels his pro-gasohol efforts, pointing out that such policies help farmers.

A potential Dole scandal—reported a few months ago but since lost in the controversy over his wife's trust fund and his connection to a Federal contract received by a former aide—is the purchase by the Doles of an apartment in a Florida cooperative, Sea View, in 1982. Andreas, the chair and major stockholder of Sea View, gave the Doles preferential treatment. That year Dole shot down a Reagan proposal to end Federal subsidies for gasohol.

As the record demonstrates, there are two Bob Doles, one a tightfisted, ideologically correct conservative, the other a sometimes caring, populist Republican. During the campaign, he has carried on a delicate balancing act—preaching compassion yet reaching out to his party's extremists. He flirted with backing the brutal but anti-Communist Mozambique resistance, Renamo. He dragged his heels regarding the intermediate-range nuclear forces treaty before endorsing it. He lambasted Secretary of State George Shultz for meeting last year with Oliver Tambo, head of the African National Congress. In 1986 he leaned toward supporting an amendment of the tax reform bill that would have taxed nonprofit hospitals and clinics that perform abortions.

After his failed bids for Vice President in 1976 and President in 1980, Dole finally seems to have his act together. His campaign and record offer something for everyone. Last week's win in Iowa has him well-positioned to steal the Republican nomination from Bush. Polls show he is the Republican most liked by Democrats, who apparently are more aware of his claims to competence and compassion than to conservatism.

Which is the real Bob Dole? Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde? As in Robert Louis Stevenson's tale, there are times when one is in control and instances when the two conflict, as Dole juggles his ambition, conservatism, conscience and commitments to President and party. So far, while campaigning, Dole has kept Mr. Hyde well hidden. As long as he does that, he's only showing us half the man. □

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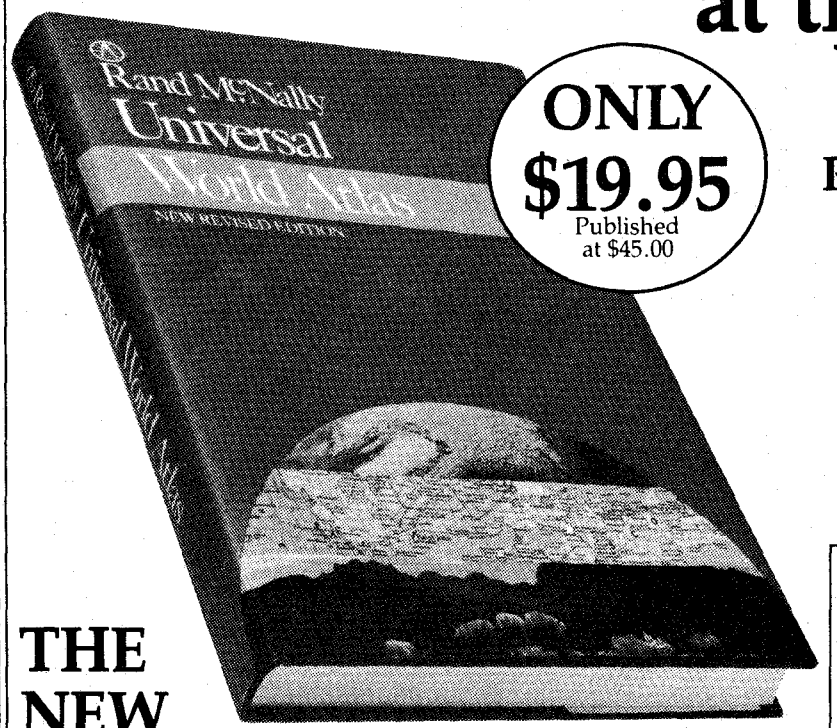

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Longest Century

GEOFFREY FIELD

THE AGE OF EMPIRE 1875-1914. *By Eric Hobsbawm. Pantheon. 340 pp. $22.95.*

For forty years Eric Hobsbawm's polymathic brilliance has enriched the study of modern history. Few historians anywhere have played such a seminal role in so many debates; few have wider interests. A recently compiled bibliography of his writings about labor history, peasant studies, historiography and contemporary politics came to more than thirty pages and his pace does not seem to be slowing. Reading Hobsbawm or hearing him speak, one is struck by the same characteristic qualities: remarkable factual command, lucid analysis, a conviction that theory—in his case Marxist theory—and politics are inseparable from the practice of history, and a refreshingly old-fashioned belief that a historical perspective is vital to understanding the world we inhabit.

While it can be read as a self-contained work, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914* is the final part of a trilogy on the "long nineteenth century" that began with the American and French Revolutions and closed with World War I. Hobsbawm's goal in these volumes is to reach a wide audience and the books are immensely readable and provocative, free of the arcane apparatus of semiotics or econometric models, informed but not overwhelmed by theory. Yet this is not a conventional narrative history devoted to coverage of the main facts but a sustained interpretation that traces the emergence, triumph and global impact of Europe's industrial bourgeoisie. A thorough grasp of recent scholarship and a quick eye for recondite but telling details (e.g., the number of opera houses, golf clubs, working telephones or translations of the Bible at certain dates) is combined with bold interpretations that draw together the processes of economic, social, political and cultural change. Above all, perhaps, these books suggest the complex connectedness of all things.

Hobsbawm began with *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848* (1962), which covered the decisive "dual revolution" of an industrial capitalism pioneered in Britain and the transformation of political values spearheaded in America and France. Conceptually this "dual revolution" gave unity and symmetry to an era of unprecedented change. It encompassed the retreat of the old landed order and absolute monarchies, the first faltering advances of a new bourgeois liberal society and successive waves of political and social revolution culminating in the general crisis of 1848. The conflicting ideologies and artistic experimentalism of the Romantic period are anchored in the same social and political matrix. Certain chapters require revision in the light of more recent monographic research, the treatment of some subjects—especially women's history—is now clearly deficient, but as a general interpretation the book holds up remarkably well.

A sequel, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (1975), traced the global expansion of the capitalist market economy during the unprecedented mid-century boom, and the triumph of Europe's liberal bourgeoisie (although Hobsbawm acknowledges that this was seldom translated into formal political rule). This volume filled a scholarly void by mapping the main contours of these complex and eventful decades. Hobsbawm's focus widens beyond the core states of Europe to the United States, China, India and Latin America, showing how formerly remote regions were drawn into the tightening web of the international economy. At the heart of the study is his depiction of the bourgeoisie, richer and more conscious of class identity than before, convinced of scientific and technological progress, and supremely confident of man's rational ability to find solutions to the problems he confronted. Hobsbawm's picture of unrelieved boom and bourgeois assertiveness is, to my mind, overdrawn, but as a synthesis the book has great merits.

Now, thirteen years later, we have the final volume, which begins with the abrupt economic downswing of the early 1870s and concludes with the surge of popular patriotism in August 1914 as the European powers mobilized for war. Like the previous two, this book begins with an analysis of economic change as the chief determinant of social and political development. The long boom ended with the great stock exchange crash of 1873, ushering in a more unsettled period of expansion, punctuated by sharp economic contractions. Not until the mid-1890s did the global economy again shift gears, bringing renewed inflationary pressures and continuous growth. Heightened international competition among manufacturing nations lowered prices, profits and interest rates, while the opening up of vast new farm acreage in North America and elsewhere placed enormous competitive burdens upon European agriculture.

Some historians will certainly find Hobsbawm's account too grim, too ready to heed the alarmist rhetoric of business in an era of diminished expectations; others may claim excessive reductionism in his effort to link political and cultural phenomena to the changing character of the economy. But for Hobsbawm the "Great Depression" (1873-95) is the key to the period, impelling entrepreneurs and governments to adopt a variety of national strategies: protective tariffs; business concentration, cartels and market control; increased governmental intervention at home and the carving out of formal imperial "spheres of influence" to safeguard overseas markets and raw materials. In short, the eclipse of the mid-century liberal free-trade system. This set the scene for intensified economic and political rivalry in the 1890s and a dramatic national reordering as Britain lost ground relative to the explosive growth of the German and U.S. economies.

The image of pre-1914 Europe fashioned in the turbulent 1920s and sedulously promoted by films and TV today is that of a *belle époque*, a rapturous summer before the guns of August thundered. Hobsbawm cannot resist the occasional reference to its civility—in contrast to what followed—but his aim is to demystify a period that for his generation existed in that twilight between memory and history. Retrospectively, the "Age of Empire" called forth images of power, wealth, stability and order; imperialism had reshaped the self-image of the colonizers as much as their colonial subjects. By contrast, Hobsbawm de-

Geoffrey Field teaches at the State University of New York, Purchase, and is writing a book about Britain in World War II.

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picts an increasingly troubled and beleaguered bourgeoisie, alarmed by economic fluctuations, confronted by newly organized labor and democratizing political pressures at home and uneasy about powerful national rivals abroad. Their numbers, of course, were augmented by vast new armies of professionals, business executives, clerks and the petite bourgeoisie, but this very diversity somehow diminished their identity and coherence as a class and shook their collective sense of historic mission.

Throughout this book, as in its predecessors, Hobsbawm maintains a thoroughly comparative approach. This has obvious virtues but also some drawbacks, especially in the chapter titled "The Politics of Democracy." The themes developed are familiar: wider electoral participation, the dissolution of local frameworks of political power, the mobilization of new political strata and the professionalism of mass politics. The new scale of politics, chides Hobsbawm (perhaps reacting too much to the present), ended frank debate and relegated serious political discussion to an educated minority, while politicians "wrapped themselves in rhetoric," and produced "a yawning gap between public discourse and political reality." Far from being an automatic reflex of modernization, democratization proceeded unevenly out of a tangle of popular pressures, governmental concessions, elite manipulation and strategies of containment.

Hobsbawm eschews a systematic survey of the politics of the 1870s and 1880s as "difficult, and almost pointless" (in fact, none is provided for the post-1890 period, either). In consequence, he does not delineate the differently evolving political institutions and state structures of the major European nations and the particular balance of social forces they represented. The crisis of the liberal state assumed very different forms in Britain, Germany, Italy and France. And since he does not clarify these different national patterns of development, he provides little basis for grasping the radically divergent routes of these states after 1914.

Hobsbawm has never been as inclined as, say, E.P. Thompson to spell out the theoretical assumptions of his history. While these may be implicit, I do not get from this book a clear picture of his views about the modern state. There are general comments about the shift to collectivism and a wonderful section on the growing recourse of governments to irrationalist appeals and "the invention of tradition," that is, the use of orchestrated public rituals, monarchical spectacles and patriotic symbolism (flags, anthems, etc.) to promote unity and consent. Acute observations about the widening sphere of state intervention and the forms of ideological hegemony are scattered through every chapter. But the state is seen above all in terms of its functional effects rather than its structure.

There is, for example, no clarifying discussion of what is meant by a "bourgeois revolution." If it signifies only the successful installation of a legal, constitutional and ideological framework that promotes capitalism, then it can clearly take on very different national forms. And if the state operates on behalf of an ascendant bourgeoisie, what degree of autonomy is enjoyed by political and state institutions? In what ways do state and capital conflict? And how does the state act as a forum or reflection of class conflict?

There are also some notable silences. While the book is versatile in its use of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, remarkably little is said about the coercive aspects of state power, about the military or the police or what one might call the nineteenth-century transformation from a traditional to a modern police state. Also, by concentrating so heavily upon the bourgeoisie and working class as the chief protagonists in this Age of Empire, Hobsbawm never really addresses the residual power (economic and political) of pre-industrial, aristocratic elites, and their varying national roles. He fails to debate, for example, the controversial thesis of Arno Mayer's ***The Persistence of the Old Regime*** (1981) or Martin Wiener's ***English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit*** (1981), which stress the degree to which aristocratic codes and the old governing structures survived the challenge of the bourgeoisie.

Far more successful are the two chapters devoted to "byproducts" of democratization, namely the rise of working-class parties and of political nationalism. They are the condensed product of a lifetime of reading. Hobsbawm points, for example, to the difficulties—intensified where divisions of religion, nationality and language existed—in transforming local and occupational solidarities into national working-class trade union and political movements. Drawing on his earlier spe-

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cialized studies, he traces the ways in which the heterogeneous structure of the industrial economy fractionalizes the working class, producing differences of status and organizational divisions; but he also shows the increasing definition of a "world of labor," socially segregated, culturally separate, more self-enclosed than before and politically independent. He brilliantly evokes the dynamism and complexity of class relationships. There is nothing static or mechanical about the analysis: it captures both the interaction of diverse groups within a class and the relationships between classes.

Nationalism exerted enormous appeal in the period after 1880 and in many areas became a general substratum of all varieties of politics. The decline of "real" localized communities intensified popular longings for an imaginary community to fill the void. This coincided with governmental strategies to promote solidarity. Hobsbawm explores the role of nationalism as a new civic religion, increasingly annexed by the right and imbibed "as a cocktail" with quotients of anti-Semitism and anti-socialism. He reminds us of its mobilizing power, its cohesive impact in some states, its centrifugal threat to the existing state structures elsewhere (in the Habsburg lands especially, but he also treats Basque, Finnish, Irish and Zionist movements). The emphasis is upon nationalism as a consciously developed artifact: primarily an urban, middle-class phenomenon with particular appeal for the new, fast-growing strata of white-collar workers and tertiary sector employees; related to the spread of literacy and new educational systems; and incubated not least among exile cultures in the New World.

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By contrast to the previous volumes, this one includes a chapter on women. "The New Woman" is largely about the middle class, although some effort is made to indicate the diverse ways in which industrialization transformed the lives of laboring women. The very processes of democratization that included more men in public life increasingly restricted the place of women, creating a new formal political realm that, initially at least, was male. But by 1914 striking new developments in women's lives were evident: in the size of families, education, the range of women's employment, women's organization around a variety of social causes and growing pressure for political emancipation. In ***The Age of Capital*** Hobsbawm pointed to the tension between the patriarchal organization of the bourgeois family with "a male lord dominating a number of hierarchically graded females" and the ruling economic and political doctrines of liberty and individualism; here he begins to explore the threats to the patriarchal order as one more factor contributing to the "uncertainties" of the male bourgeoisie.

A major goal of the trilogy is to show how the social and economic power of the bourgeoisie was translated into hegemony in the realm of ideas. Hobsbawm has been consistently more conservative in his attitude toward base and superstructure than other leading Marxist writers in Britain without mechanically reducing intellectual to material life. In ***The Age of Empire*** he seeks in two insightful and densely packed chapters to reveal how the crises and contradictions of the bourgeois order manifested themselves in the arts and sciences. This produced a sharp break with the past, a proliferation of innovation, uncertainty and fragmentation. Essentially we have a Schorskean picture of vanishing mid-century verities (positivistic science, confidence in social and moral progress, conviction that man was above all a rational being) replaced by the loss of coherence, a sense of having no fixed limits. Even the foundations of science were shaken and then reconstructed by Einstein, Planck, Poincaré and Freud, although little space is devoted to the last of these. The gulf between public and avant-garde widened; indeed, Hobsbawm argues, the intellectual elite which set itself the task of revolutionizing culture was far outpaced by the transforming power of new forms of mass entertainment, provided by astute businessmen. It was popular music, a cheap press, mass advertising and above all the cinema that transformed cultural life, signaling the dawn of the age of mass consumerism and with it the cultural predominance of the United States.

The final convulsion of this liberal order was triggered by the intersection of two interrelated crises. First, there was a global pattern of political turmoil and revolution, resulting from the renewed expansion of the industrial economies after 1895, which weakened traditional sociopolitical structures in the colonial periphery, undermined pre-existing regional balances of power and threatened the more rickety political structures among the imperialists themselves. Hobsbawm refers to a "global political earthquake zone," stretching from Mexico to Morocco, through the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires to Persia, Russia and China, all of which experienced the shocks of impending or actual revolutions after 1900. Second, there was the intensification of Great Power tension played out through the nervous diplomacy of two antagonistic alliance blocs and made even more dangerous by the seemingly inflexible requirements of military planning. The shots at Sarajevo coupled the crises of revolution and state rivalry in a war that shattered the old Europe.

Hobsbawm's reworking of the Leninist argument reintroduces a measure of economic determination into the standard accounts of the ways in which the major states were drawn into conflicts in the unstable periphery. Of course, there are problems, not least that the economic and political linkages along Hobsbawm's global fault line are often asserted rather than demonstrated. But a more serious objection can be made to this as a general assessment of the war's origins. His comparative approach leads him to concentrate on the similarities in the conditions of the major powers rather than their marked differences. In particular, Hobsbawm does not adequately analyze the structure, internal dynamics, policies and goals of the Wilhelminian Reich. He says little about the shattering impact of Germany's emergence as a world power (aside from some perfunctory comments on the naval race with Britain).

If there was a divergent course of German development or ***Sonderweg***—and in a recent discussion at the New School for Social Research in New

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York City, Hobsbawm sided with this view—then it needs to be specified more clearly. As he seemed to admit in that same discussion, his view of the nineteenth century is somewhat Anglocentric; his cynosure is Britain as a paradigmatic case of the triumphs and travails of bourgeois society. The twentieth century, he asserts, is dominated by the Bolshevik Revolution and the reshaping of Western capitalism in reaction to it. Overlapping the two chronologically, of course, is the meteoric rise and fall of a unified German nation. It is this sense of the Age of Empire—as the start of a struggle for German hegemony which accelerated the "political collapse of Europe"—which somehow gets lost in Hobsbawm's book.

Running through this volume is another theme, softer and more intermittent than the others—a horror at the barbarism of the post-1914 period, a sense of how far we have slipped from the nineteenth century and its high expectations of civility and human progress. The epilogue returns to this theme, in effect the contrast between Hobsbawm's own world (he was born in 1917) and that of his parents. Before 1914, he points out, only population statistics for entire nations were calculated in millions; subsequently, such magnitudes described the numbers of those driven into exile and the victims of war and genocide. "Hecatombs on this scale," he adds, "were beyond the range of imagination in the nineteenth century." He tries to leave us with hope but pessimism seems to prevail:

> prediction suggests not a continued ascent, but the possibility, perhaps even the imminence, of some catastrophe.

The Age of Empire forms a splendid capstone to the two earlier volumes. I closed this book full of admiration for the way it brings interpretive unity to the period without minimizing its diversity and complexity. Where else can we find a synthesis of this sophistication that places class struggle at the center of the analysis? Written against the background of Margaret Thatcher's rejection of Britain's postwar political consensus and the post-Vietnam realization of the limits and contradictions of U.S. power, it emboldens readers to think about the larger historical patterns of our own times; it reminds us, if we need a reminder, that our world is as impermanent, fragile and transitional as the pre-1914 "World of Yesterday." □

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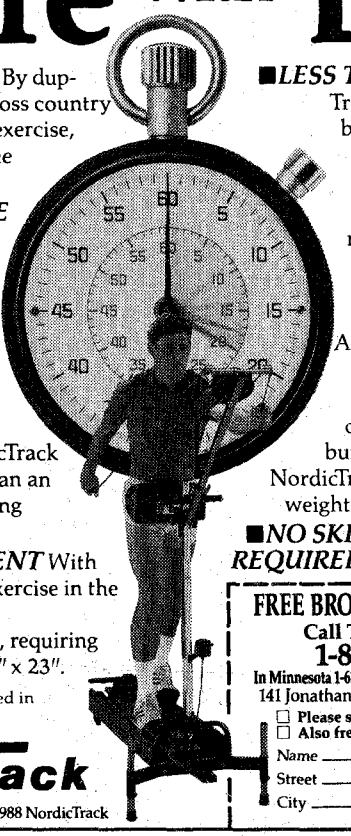

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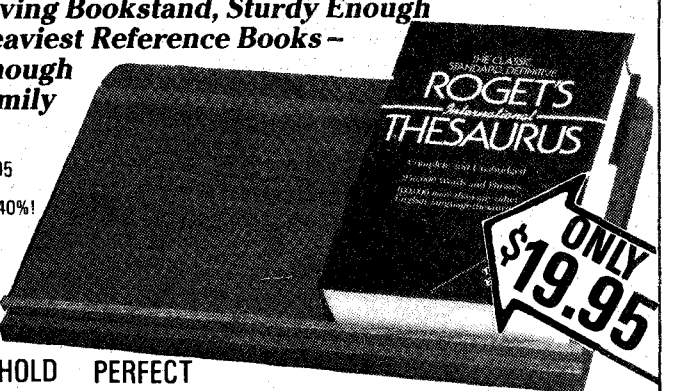

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HEAVY DAUGHTER BLUES: Poems & Stories 1968–1986. *By Wanda Coleman. Black Sparrow Press. 220 pp. $20. Paper $9.*

Are people afraid of Wanda Coleman? "Oh God, are they ever, man," she answers. "And maybe with good reason. Because often I've walked around this town and I'm just a moment away from homicide. I'm that kind of angry." One immediately sees how Wanda Coleman's poetry and prose have been inspired by her frustration and anger at her position as a black woman and by her desire to translate those feelings into action. Though Coleman sees herself as an object of fear, the beauty of her work lies in her consistent ability to draw the reader into her language and her reality—sometimes by focusing on the distance between reader and writer and sometimes on their inherent nearness.

Wanda Coleman was born in 1946 and raised on the edge of Watts, California; she has worked as a medical billing clerk/transcriber, waitress, typist, dancer and screenwriter. The first black writer to win an Emmy for daytime drama as well as the first black woman editor of a major black men's magazine, Coleman raised her three children as a single mother on welfare. And she writes of what she knows—of job interviews, soap operas, dying love and dead children, of hungry lives determined by the politics of "the tall caucasian men," of drugs and prostitution and madness—in essence, of the lives of the black urban poor in the ghettos of Los Angeles.

Coleman's poems are themselves an act of liberation, meant to be experienced as something almost physical, like a punch or a whipping or an "intercerebral hemorrhage/coma or/acute onset of coronary/during coitus," as she writes in "La Dolce Morte." She wants her language to express anger, to incite anger and to shake all who read it out of their complacency—and she often succeeds. In her opening poem, "Stone Rock Lady," Coleman offers a portrait of a woman of seemingly great strength, one who "take[s] stone injections" in order to become impenetrable. With a wry smile on her face, she taunts the reader, challenging him to "try and pierce my zinkenite vagina." This woman alone symbolizes power, not as the traditional earth mother but as "the rock lady" whose arms "crush the men" she has made, "especially the ones of shale/who are delicate, egotists/who make the mistake of thinking/their sheet rock dicks/are enough to bring me crumbling to my knees."

Yet if you listen closely enough you begin to hear the insecurities underneath the poem's blatantly menacing tone. Coleman's harsh words represent solid walls built "against the watery tide of emotions/my defense against love, against fear." In order to achieve a "soul of flint/heart of mica/eye of diamond" she must shoot up, injecting qualities which do not exist naturally within her, to guard and "steel me against the world." Coleman's self-protective impulses are universal: Like all of us, she wants to "be able to take it all/and come away whole . . . solid as gibraltar."

Feelings of alienation and a consciousness of forever being seen as "other" permeate much of Coleman's poetry; she has either been left or deliberately moved outside the inner circle, which may consist of an all-male writers' group hanging out in a Watts café ("I was a stubborn little mud hen at the fringe of the clique,/starved/for approval") or the mass of young white Hollywood professionals ("I am plagued by the fear of not making it/poverty claws at me claws at me claws at me") or the family of her white lover ("his towheaded cousin of 5 greeted him warmly,/turned, looked at me, cocked his head/'I thought they didn't allow niggers up heah!'/he dropped his jaw and turned red. i fled the room/in the car, later, he tried to console me. he could not find words/and i had none for the ugly i felt"). While Coleman sometimes manages to summon up the strength to break through the cracks and enter the circle or just walk away, often she can do neither, controlled by forces too big for her to confront:

> they're all against you in that paranoiac $$$
> prism keep trying to see yourself/reflection
> oooh black as swamp bottom mired in muck you
> violent animal struggle struggle struggle to
> get to solid ground get free get solidified/
> grounded
>
> ("Essay on Language")

Coleman writes with an immediacy that lets us know that she is there inside the poem, and that we must sit beside her. We feel no sense of voyeurism, for Coleman assumes the reader is her comrade, one who understands and who can be brought into the action, into her inner life. This absence of distance intensifies our experience—sometimes to the point of becoming oppressive. When Coleman expresses her disgust for her impotent lover, we have no time to step back, to cover our ears. We aren't merely listening to her message to him; she has turned around and speaks directly to us:

> i'm starved for that mythical hard-on and it is a myth
> my hands are cramped/tired/have failed to jerk him into
> a salute. he's one of *those*—60s damage
> it's the same old grunt struggle the same old pain unsaid
> the same old stinky disappointment
>
> ("Barry's Goodbye")

Sometimes the stretch for the powerful fails, and Coleman leaves us with the trivial or the clichéd. Sometimes no balance is found between the polemical and the understated. ("Save me from bigoted old white bitches" or "daddy wants me to be a little woman/of the house. no more rough and tumble.") And sometimes it all comes together and works, as in "Day of Remembrance":

> when you salt my wound, gentle hand
> be aware of the pain that signifies healing
> that keloid/my suffered love
> centuries thick,
> and the atlantic of my tears
> affords no passage back
> that africa has vanished
> when you touch my cheek, gentle hand
> and plumb my eyes with yours
> be aware.
> the hurt signifies knowing

Several of Coleman's pieces are purely celebratory—of sex, of women's bodies, of forgiveness, of the bond between mothers and daughters or between women. She has the gift of articulating pure desire, whether for men—"certainly that big red tongue/certainly that big red throb i love to ride into/wild wild trem-

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blings surrounded/cloaked/in your numb lust/it is. yes indeed"—or for another woman: "his wife and i exchanged a look/(let me have you. let me touch you. you'll/never want a man again)/i smiled/he wasn't the first man i'd ever seen/with a case of pussy envy."

Often Coleman expresses her tone of celebration, of emotional freedom or of lament by using a biblical cadence. With repetition and internal rhyme she creates the quality of a prayer or a song, sometimes even labeling a stanza the "refrain." In fact, several of her poems—"Blues for the Man on Sax," "Walkin' Papers Blues" and "Bottom Out Blues"—sound as if Coleman wrote them with music in mind: "you scoot along the bottom/think you goin' somewheres/you scoot around on bottom/think you gonna go somewheres/you walkin' in the darkness/see daylight everywhere."

Heavy Daughter Blues, Coleman's third book, also offers us the first look at her prose. She intersperses the collection of 137 poems with sixteen prose pieces, some of them full-blown short stories, effectively arranged to act as counterpoints or commentary on the poems around them. Perhaps the most powerful of the prose pieces is "The Blues in the Night," a portrait of a divorced mother whose feelings of sexual longing and desperation Coleman makes almost as tangible for the reader as they are for the character: "She aches for seduction/his lips pressing in on hers. She aches to yield to his manful grasp working her back, her shoulders, her breasts. She can almost inhale that pungent musk opening her nose, obliterating all thought." Alone one night, her children in bed, she searches through her records for music to "lull/temper/arrest" the "beastly savage aprowl in her veins." As she plays her 45s, from James Brown to Al Green to Otis Redding, she dances alone around her living room, reveling in herself: "Her head is soaked and her hair goes all the way back to Africa. She bends, turns, spins until she's one with that sound. One pulse. One throb hip-quaking—a frenzy working her way through steps she knows as intimately as the scars on her psyche." She bathes, dresses, glances in at her children, and then, as "a jolt of expectation shoots through her," she "hastens along that familiar avenue certain of her destination/that honky tonk haven, that urbane ubiety of flesh hunters and soulful survivors." Coleman has succeeded in writing something quite revolutionary here: the portrait of a woman who is an actively sexual being, without shame or guilt, as well as a responsible mother.

Wanda Coleman consistently confronts her readers with images, ideas and language that threaten to offend or at least to excite. In the title poem, she seems quite deliberate in her desire to shock, so much so that one can only suspect her of having finally let us in on the joke. Her tongue is firmly set in her cheek as she offers us a glimpse at the persona of Wanda, a rock lady, the public Wanda: "the t.v. is teaching my children hibakusha/i am in love with a dope fiend who sleeps under freeways/my neighbors are refugees from S.A./and i speak negrese." We want to listen to her poems, to hear her, often in spite of ourselves. Yes, people *are* afraid of Wanda Coleman. And, knowing this, she celebrates, telling us in the last stanza of "Heavy Daughter Blues":

> i throw the symbols. i make reverberations
>
> myth/my girlchild and me
> cackle joyfully in the kitchen
> as we make cookies
> for the party of the world □

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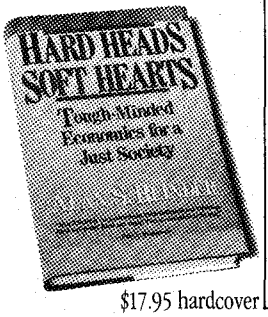

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THEATER.

THOMAS M. DISCH

The Phantom of the Opera
Ice Capades

No one with tickets to see *The Phantom of the Opera* at the ever so much more Majestic Theater could be deterred from attending by the suspicion (which is easily enough confirmed by listening to the record) that Andrew Lloyd Webber's music is humdrum or that the story does not engage the gears of the imagination. Only the possibility of scalping those tickets for $500 a pair or more, their present reported street value, might tempt someone to postpone the pleasure of seeing Maria Björnson's imposing and sinfully expensive sets until the 1990s, but then one would miss Michael Crawford in the title role, and Crawford's performance is impressive in proportion as it is unsupported by script or score. He manages to turn in a memorable performance simply by the way he drapes his capes and rumbles his chest tones, giving the impression at almost every statuesque moment of an animated *tableau vivant*.

The larger, dramatic failure of *Phantom* springs from the unwillingness of Webber and his underling lyricists, Charles Hart and Richard Stilgoe (to each of whom, a single loud raspberry) to come to terms with the unseemly appeal of their story, despite, or because of, that story's remarkable congruence with the facts of Webber's and his wife's careers. Webber, admittedly, is not grossly disfigured (though neither, for that matter, is Crawford as the Phantom when seen unmasked: With a hairpiece and a dab of makeup he wouldn't need a mask at all), but Webber is certainly homely enough to have some fellow feeling for the enchanted frogs and ugly ducklings of the world, and his wife, Sarah Brightman, who sings the role of Christine, a chorus girl who rises to stardom through the Svengali-like offices of the Phantom, is circumstanced all too similarly. This became painfully clear even before the show transferred from London to New York, when Webber used his clout to force Equity to back down from its ungallant but accurate insistence that Brightman was not a star of the first magnitude and therefore was not entitled to accompany the show to Broadway as an essential artistic component. Brightman has a piping, penny-whistle voice, and a stage manner still in its pre-Svengali phase. Virtually everyone else in the cast upstages her at some point in the show, and she flubs even such a should-be sure-fire moment as the Phantom's unmasking.

The modest dimension of Brightman's talent is less the problem than the hollowness of the character of Christine, who never makes a suitable dramatic or musical response to the Phantom's song of seduction, "The Music of the Night," a song that is more an exercise in Webber patting his own aesthetic back than an expression of the Phantom's sinister allure. *Phantom*'s subtext is the traditional gothic equating of woman's presumed repulsion at the demands of men, those beasts, and a horror of death, with the further *fin de siècle* insistence that art derives its power from Eros and (due to their equation) from Thanatos as well. Thus, if Christine is to become a great singer, she must not only submit to the Phantom's vile embrace but must become complicit in his foul deeds, which, indeed, she does, insofar as she becomes his protégée on the stage of the Opera. Properly dramatized, that would provide enough meat for a music drama worthy of Harold Prince's vast budget and incontestable stagecraft, but the book by Stilgoe and Webber does all it can to defuse, denature and prettify their dramatic premise. The Phantom's self-declarations as an evil genius are about as persuasive as Michael Jackson's too-much-protested "I'm Bad!" His unloosing of the chandelier doesn't hurt anyone; his (two) murders take place offstage, and his one moment of hands-on villainy, when he has Christine's lover Raoul at his mercy, is singularly underproduced and innocuous. In the end the Phantom receives no comeuppance but vanishes in a spritz of stage-magic, leaving behind his mask, as though it were the lyre of Orpheus. No wonder Christine never found the man an energizing presence. Webber's Phantom is no more wicked or sexy than the little boy who exists as the voice-over in *Starlight Express*, and who was, similarly, the mask of that terrible infant, Andrew Lloyd Webber. He's bad, he's so bad, he's very bad, he's bad as can be.

The Ice Capades lately at Madison Square Garden, thence to the Meadow-

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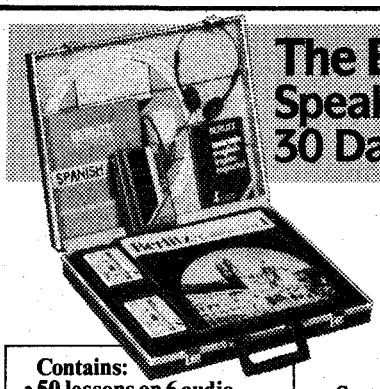
lands, Nassau Coliseum and points west, represents an older, homelier form of extravagance. Because an ice skating show plays to stadium-sized audiences, those whose pocketbooks or consciences twinge at the price of Broadway tickets can enjoy an evening that is all glitter and pizazz at small expense and with no egalitarian qualms. The Ice Capades may never rise to the aesthetic heights of the best ballets and musicals, but neither does it ever fail to satisfy a basic hunger for a flavor of beauty uniquely its own. No other dance form commands such broad realms of space or moves through that space with such dreamlike seeming ease. None—except the ballets of aerialists (which have been incorporated, thrillingly, into this year's Ice Capades)—dramatize with such flair Newton's laws of motion. The aesthetic price that the ice dancer pays for these effects is a more limited vocabulary of motion: the glide, the swoop, the loop, the spin, but never the more abrupt forms of punctuation and syncopation that can be achieved after a single tango lesson at Arthur Murray's. Ice skaters, even the best of them, even Torvill and Dean in this year's Ice Capades, always seem to be waltzing.

The show's choreographer, Sarah Kawahara, has created a succession of production numbers that dazzle without inducing snow blindness. In the show's opening number she fills the arena not with the unison motions and choral geometries that are the usual fare of ice shows (there's plenty of that later) but with a contrapuntal cross-stitching of almost Balanchine-like complexity. Choreographically it may be the evening's high point, but in terms of spectacle nothing could exceed the finale, with its aerialist butterflies and ice-spins that evolve into astonishingly fast aerial rpms. The comic acts were genuinely funny, particularly for those in the upper tiers, out of range of the buckets of water with which the clowns threatened to drench the people in the front rows. Only the obligatory pageant of trademarked children's characters was tiresome. Smurfs! I hate Smurfs. They're a libel against childhood, and no easier to stomach on ice than on the TV screen. But fifteen minutes of Smurfishness is not too large a price to pay for an evening of otherwise uncomplicated delight. Not only a better entertainment bet than *The Phantom*, but for the price of a pair of scalped tickets you could initiate a whole orphanage of children into the glories of figure skating. □



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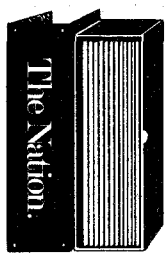

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ARCHITECTURE.

JANE HOLTZ KAY

The architecture of the exit ramp is not new. The American revolution in land use has already deposited one-third of our population on the "crabgrass frontier" known as exurbia. Unplanned and unzoned, sporadic settlement based on the highway has produced ill-sited subdivisions, awkward condominiums and megamalls formless enough to be called a new form. Various names or misnomers, like "megacenter," "urban village" or "node," have been used to describe the cloverleaf complexes where asphalt wraps around office towers, hotels and shops. Tysons Corner, a twenty-year-old development in Virginia, is the granddaddy of such pseudo-urban arrangements, and by square-foot reckoning is as large as Miami.

This, as they say, is the twenty-first-century city.

Meanwhile the grandchildren of Tysons Corner continue apace; crowded corridors lead ever more drivers to developments that have no more link to the landscape than the speedometer to the shopping cart. "In this version of the construct of the mind meeting the construct of the land, lifestyle defines ever larger enclaves, and where you live becomes of less moment than where you drive," Lois Craig writes in an issue of ***Design Quarterly*** devoted to the suburb.

Given this backdrop, the story of Loudoun County and the town of Waterford might seem an oft-told tale. Set in Virginia, a black hole of planning, Waterford is one more endangered place. If exurbia is where the dots do not connect, Waterford is the opposite—a place of such integrity of architecture and setting as to constitute a national treasure whose loss diminishes more than its own small rural village.

An enclave of 1,450 acres founded by Quakers in 1733 and bypassed by the railroad and the highway since, Waterford's surroundings define the word "picturesque." The historic village and its pastoral farmscape were designated one of the country's eighty or so National Historic Landmark Districts in 1970. The National Park Service, responsible for monitoring landmarks such as Waterford, cites only two other places that are preserved in so pristine a state: Old Deerfield Village, in Massachusetts, and Jacksonville, Oregon. So endowed and certified, this town of 300 people seemed remote indeed from attack.

Remoteness, however, is relative. The suburban seepage from the nation's capital—and Virginia's inclination to let the landscape become a thoroughfare—has transformed the rural setting of Fairfax County into a suburban boomtown. Inevitably, Fairfax County's clutter has spilled over into neighboring Loudoun County. "Don't Fairfax Loudoun," say the bumper stickers, but they protest in vain. Fifty miles, a scant hour's drive, out of Washington, Waterford is on the border of a go-for-growth region and has barely survived Loudoun County's opposition to any planning that might protect its scenic and historic resources.

To travel the route from Washington to Waterford is to see just how that planning—or nonplanning—functions. A trip heading from the capital into northern Virginia is a slide show of order and disorder in the landscape, a lesson in the benefits of controlled design versus the disaster of free-for-all development, a Virginian version of Los Angeles or Houston.

In the capital, planners have dictated a seven-story height limit and that limit has at least restrained overbuilding. Washington's so-called infill architecture has sprouted; its tucked-in buildings, though of varied quality, keep the scale of the city consistent and lessen the press of development. (Some say the city's space height restrictions—translated into low ceilings—have squashed so many bureaucrats that tall folk could file a class-action suit.) Whatever the problems of the nation's capital, they pale beside the grim toll taken on its periphery.

Head out from Washington, then, and the litter of office towers designed in neo- or geo-styles juts out of the landscape. Even plans for the supposedly metro-based complex at the Ballston stop resemble the auto-bred mall more than it does the pedestrian-oriented public transit cities of the past. To be sure, towns like Leesburg, the Loudoun County seat, show the signs of design control and revival, while an isolated corporate fiefdom like the Xerox training center sets deer to grazing beneath the shadows of planes from Dulles Airport; condos will soon evict this wildlife.

But in general the rural landscape has paid a heavy price for Dulles and the beltway boom. By the time a "laboratory" trip sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation swooped

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into Waterford, the litter of these sad sister counties had imprinted itself on the passengers' eyeballs, and the sight of the sweet little town with its willow-dotted vistas, its stone houses, old mill, dirt roads and settled farms was especially stirring. Even more was its story.

The town of Waterford is no un-self-conscious hamlet. For all its exquisite aspect—its unspoiled atmosphere, its leafed-over town center and crooked sidewalks, erratic trees and lines that do not converge—the town has sophisticated advocates with a keen sense of stewardship. Aware that its bucolic treasures were an exception to the rule of havoc, the Waterford Foundation worked for years to buy what it would guarantee to save. From its first purchase of the town mill, for $2,000 in 1943, to the present, the foundation has arranged for the permanent protection of more than half the buildings in the village and its surroundings. The imprimatur of the Federal government was thought to guarantee the rest.

Not surprisingly, the keepers of this supposedly protected treasure did not imagine that the only way they could save their 1,450 acres was to buy it all. That strategy occurred to them recently after a developer purchased the Huntley farm, a prized and most conspicuous site of seventy-seven acres, for $1.2 million. The battle was joined.

While other historic districts across the country have local rulings to insure their preservation, Waterford's designation was a torn net. Landmark status did nothing to stop private development. Zoning allowed the Huntley farm developer to plot fifty-five houses on the most lyrical vista in town, while another plan called for thirty-two new homes and seven roads.

If anyone thought that the National Trust for Historic Preservation could or would come to the aid of the abused landscape, they were mistaken. Applying to the trust for a critical issues grant, the Waterford Foundation was refused. The nation's supposed guardian angels of preservation rejected its plan to design zoning ordinances and legislation that would salvage Waterford's unique cultural heritage and provide a prototype for the nation. Despite assistance to the town in times past, the trust was passive in meetings with the developer and negligent in refusing to back a Congressional bill to garner more than moral support for the landmark from the Park Service. It was the small but feisty Preservation Action lobby that came to the aid of the foundation on the second score.

Although national observers and local advocates like Constance Chamberlin, former head of the Waterford Foundation, consider the town "the leading case in the country," there was no clamor from the trust to save Waterford as a monument for the nation. In fact, the trust's president, Jackson Walter, a weekender and summer resident of Waterford, launched into our conversation by sounding as relaxed about the fate of the place he calls his sometime home as the institution he heads. Critics of the trust's lackadaisical attitude toward preservation repeat the familiar claim that this private-public organization is stodgy and conciliatory here as elsewhere.

Whether the National Trust for Historic Preservation is, indeed, "bureaucratic, self-serving and self-absorbed," as one activist planner puts it, or is simply compromised by its dependence on funding from Congress, has been much debated. To this frequent observer, it is simply a paralysis of will that is responsible for its lack of militancy. To re-establish its credibility the trust will have to shed its indifference to this crusade.

Still mired in a narrow reverence for the single building, the trust has, in fact, lagged behind its constituency. The organization's convention in Washington this fall, for instance, featured speakers with more expansive views—people who want to save the surroundings of our Mt. Vernons and who insist on the expanded outlook implied in phrases like "view shed," "vistas" and "view corridors." (Ironically, the trust is not the only institution to default on its obligations to its constituents in Waterford. The National Wildlife Federation committed a far greater breach of faith in the eastern end of the county recently when it sold the Claude Moore farm, a 400-acre tract of open space, to pay for its new headquarters in Washington. This crime against conservation is now being challenged in the courts.)

But if such assaults are legion, the attack on this gem of the built and natural environment has prompted special concern: If this oasis, this designated district, can't be saved, what place is immune? "If you're going to have a National Historic Landmark program yet you don't have adequate authority to make the program work, then what's the point?" asks Chamberlin. The protectors at the Park Service are also impotent; support from its director does not offset

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the sorry fact that our lawmakers—and we ourselves—have failed both this island of excellence and the larger historical, cultural and scenic environment.

Bereft of Federal muscle, untended by the preservation establishment, the Waterford crusaders faced yet another shocker when the oldest part of the village came up for sale last summer; to build on the nine-acre Eleanor James lot would have intruded on the heart of the village, annihilating the eighteenth-century settlement pattern. In this case, the foundation could pay the $805,000 price and then sell off lots, sensitively sited, to recoup some of the cost. But this latest real estate transaction, completed in November, made them further realize that the solution was not a matter of anyone's pocketbook. In October, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved a Waterford Area Management Plan, a comprehensive effort that sets out the intention of the county to create zoning to protect the town and gives a study group until May to explore the issue. Still more important, in November the issue of development went on the ballot. The vote for the county Board of Supervisors became a referendum on growth in northern Virginia in general and in Waterford in particular.

Like the agitation of other activists for open space and managed growth, the town's clamor struck a responsive chord. Waterford won: Voters defeated two pro-growth candidates, including the member of the Board of Supervisors who had run on "a hate Waterford ticket and done everything possible to create animosity," in Chamberlin's words. As a result, "the prospects for good planning have increased immeasurably," she says. "But it won't be easy." That is an understatement.

For all the comfort to Waterford in that election, the larger cause cannot be laid to rest by any local victory. For if on-site agitation for design review, zoning and planned development are essential, it is disheartening that local activists should still have to go it so alone. Even in this Reagan era, it is a sad commentary on the twenty-two-year-old system of Federal landmarking and the thirty-nine-year-old national preservation organization that so little support comes from on high. It is clear beyond any doubt that Waterford, the place, should be an untouchable landmark. But it is still clearer that Waterford, the struggle, should become a beacon in our realization that our laws in no way insure that landmark status. □

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Love, Peter

HAPPY V-DAY to my sister Kira, whose compassion for this undeserving world is truly awesome. Love, John

DEAR HONEY-BUNNY, Quack! Quack! Your loving Duckling (with slippers!).

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY to Brigid Bock, whose tireless efforts for peace keep the world turning. Love, John

TO GRH: "You are today, as always, my love." —NNH

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TO THE TELEMARK KING—Thanks for making my heart sing in the sun and in the snow our love continues to grow. Lk

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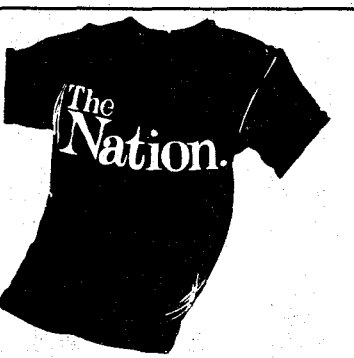

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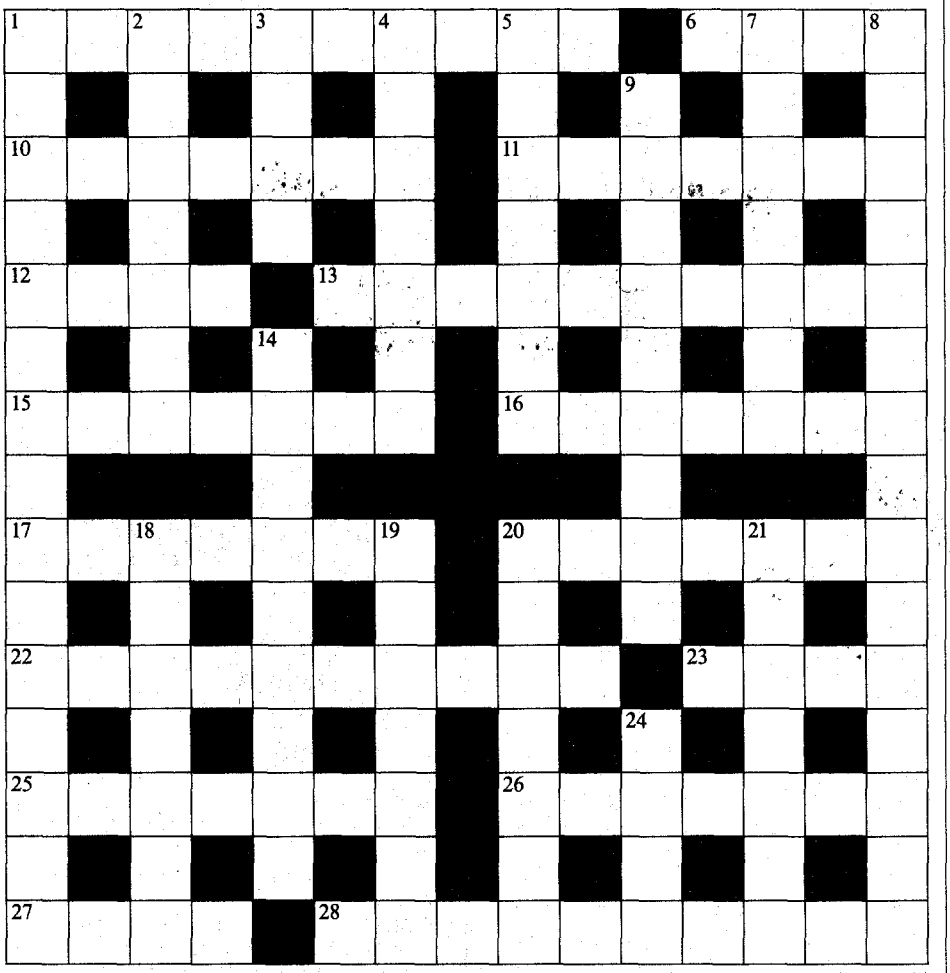

ACROSS

1 and 6 With a crick, that's where you get it to suffer punishment. (3,2,2,3,4)
10 Show here the rate of exchange? (7)
11 A stupid person, the commander, with one old weapon. (7)
12 What's left of the family in Virginia? (4)
13 It gives the old hog a mess of toast made with this. (4,6)
15 Twist in to turn out, being not very bright as such. (7)
16 Starts to eat everything in a soft mixture. (5,2)
17 Equivalent to 13, and used to be what the yachtsmen do. (7)
20 An example of a quiet-type worker, as they say, attention-getting. (7)
22 Ships that no man can serve? (3-7)
23 First, second or third example being low down? (4)
25 London police weapon familiar to sailors? (7)
26 In the vervain family, with part of the small ant a natural for it. (7)
27 Cancel the World Assembly Act? (4)
28 Brer Rabbit had to, being the cantankerous type. (10).

DOWN

1 Your amenable friends must, as a coy rejoinder. (3,5,4,3)
2 and 20 Perfect rings? (Shows where some people like to travel.) (3,4,7)
3 Carry what might be laid on this board, effectively. (4)
4 Hurried up to find noisy squabbles—anything does in reaching the point. (7)
5 Certainly not a good head for what is not unknown! (5,2)
7 What the Iran conflict does to our navy? (7)
8 Sounds like Saturday evening at one time was titled as such. (6,2,3,4)
9 Quakers, reputedly, like a writer on both sides of the page. (5,4)
14 You'll find the man a non-cleric, an altogether mountainous example. (9)
18 Looked hard, as some say, and made a point about the upper-class symbol. (7)
19 I'm in a less early environment, being something of a martyr. (7)
20 See 2 down
21 It's hard to find the first man to replace the food of 20 across. (7)
24 It's proverbially easy to come up with cooking equipment here. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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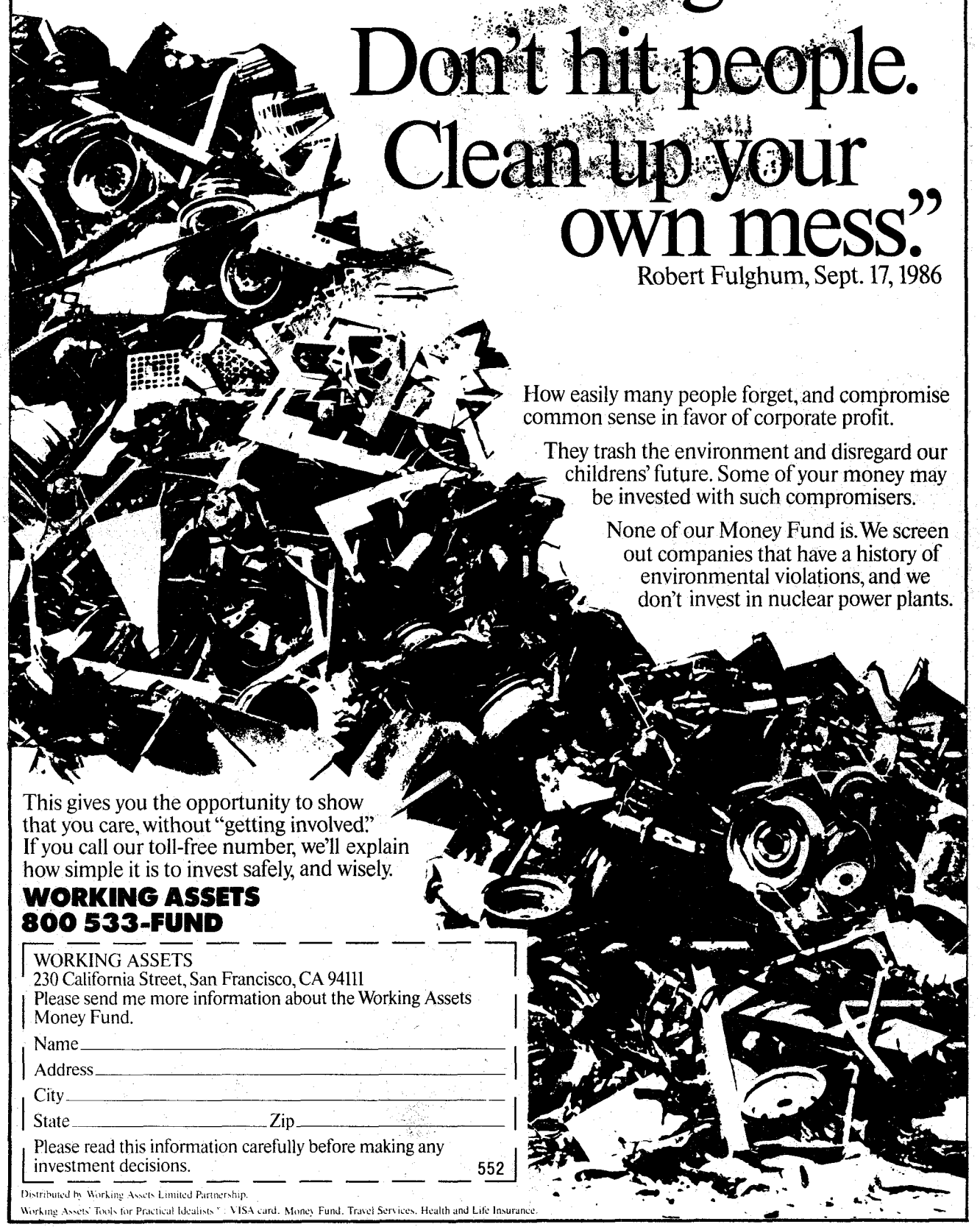

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